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INTERPRETING

A Dissertation Presented

by

STEPHANIE JO KENT

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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COMMUNICATION

INTERPRETING

A Dissertation Presented

by

STEPHANIE JO KENT

Approved as to style and content by:

Leda Cooks, Chair

Briankle Chang, Member

Carey Dimmitt, Member

Martha Fuentes Bautista, Member

Edwin Gentzler, Member

Erica Sharrer, Chairperson
Department of Communication

Language is the medium and progenitor of discourse.

~ Evangelina Holvino ~

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ABSTRACT

INTERPRETING

MAY 2014

STEPHANIE JO KENT, A.A., VINCENNES UNIVERSITY

B.S., BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

M.Ed., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Ph.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Leda Cooks

What do community interpreting for the Deaf in western societies, conference interpreting for the European Parliament, and language brokering in international management have in common? Academic research and professional training have historically emphasized the linguistic and cognitive challenges of interpreting, neglecting or ignoring the social aspects that structure communication. All forms of interpreting are inherently social; they involve relationships among at least three people and two languages. The contexts explored here, American Sign Language/English interpreting and spoken language interpreting within the European Parliament, show that simultaneous interpreting involves attitudes, norms and values about intercultural communication that overemphasize information and discount cultural identity.

The default mode of interpreting shows a desire for speed that suppresses differences requiring cultural mediation. It is theorized this imbalance stems from the invention and implementation of simultaneous interpreting within a highly charged historical moment that was steeped in trauma. Interpreting as a professional practice developed in keeping with technological capacities and historical contingencies accompanying processes of industrialization and modernity. The resulting expectations

about what interpreting can and cannot achieve play out in microsocial group dynamics (as inequality) and macrosocial policy (legalized injustice).

Interpreting invites an encounter with difference: foreignization is embedded within the experience of participating in simultaneous interpretation because interpreting disrupts the accustomed flow of consciousness, forcing participants to adapt (or resist adapting) to an alternate rhythm of turn-taking. This results in an unusual awareness of time. Discomforts associated with heightened time-consciousness open possibilities for deep learning and new kinds of relationships among people, ideas, and problem-setting.

An analysis of the frustrations of users (interpretees) and practitioners (interpreters) suggests the need for other remedies than complete domestication. Reframing training for interpreters, and cultivating skillful and strategic participation by interpretees, could be leveraged systematically to improve social equality and reduce intercultural tensions through a balanced emphasis on sharing understanding and creating mutually-relevant meanings. This comparative cultural and critical discourse analysis enables an action research/action learning hypothesis aimed at intercultural social resilience: social control of diversity can be calibrated and contained through rituals of participation in special practices of simultaneously-interpreted communication.

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CHAPTER 1

INTERPRETING

Why is participating in interpreted communication so challenging? The backdrop for the study is the researcher's career development as an American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpreter beginning in the late 1980s. In the first formal phase of research, seventy interpreters for the EP were interviewed about their experiences interpreting for Members of the EP. In the second phase, fifty-five Members of the European Parliament were interviewed about their experiences with interpreting in the EP.¹ In both these phases, participant-observation was also conducted. Reflections on the researcher's professional career as an interpreter for the Deaf occurred in parallel, involving academic literature, participant-observation and action research. Intended as a social justice intervention, this dissertation poses simultaneous interpretation as a special practice of intercultural communication with ritual elements implicating identities and relationships that are as important for society as the linguistic transfer of information.

1.1 Culture as Communication (Communication as Culture)

James W. Carey, an American communication theorist, summarizes the two complementary aspects of all communication processes: the ritual aspect existing in time, and the transmission aspect that operates in space (1992). Further, Carey explains how

¹ Nearly seventy Members of the European Parliament participated in these conversational interviews. A back-up glitch resulted in the loss of half the hard data. Field notes from those interviews are consistent with the findings gleaned from the corpus of transcribed interviews.

culture is generated by the performance of rituals through time, and how control of culture is exercised through the transmission of information across space. This research about simultaneous interpretation illustrates how rituals of talk about interpreting (in live discourses as well as in academic literature) emphasize mainly the transmission aspects of the communication process. This one-sided emphasis generates an ideologically-delimited culture that manifests in particular types of being (roughly, a kind of identity) and a privileged manner for doing interpreted communication. In particular, the routine behaviors normalized by discourses about interpreted interaction play out in the actual relationships among-and-between people of similar and different identities.

A discursive emphasis on transmission of information reflects predominant values about knowledge, technology and economy, and also contributes to how people orient to the experience of time and thus of social interaction. At a macrosocial level, the evolution of the field of professional simultaneous interpretation offers an example of the social construction of technology with specific and particular effects on individual identities as well as the capacity of individuals to create and maintain relationships both within and across cultural difference. The European Parliament is a site of production for a language ideology about simultaneous interpretation: linking microsocial features of the discourse about SI in the EP with microsocial features of Deaf discourse about SI brings into view the generation of social inequality through “the same linguistic signs or discourse practices... indexically linked by speakers to more than one group, at varying degrees of abstraction and inclusion, and at multiple sites of use and levels of awareness” (Kroskrity, 2000, p. 28). *Such micro-macro linking also brings into view the converse,* the action research hypothesis undergirding this dissertation: social equality.

The perspective gleaned from how simultaneous interpretation was originally conceived and operationalized can be cynical or optimistic. The current values and rituals that associate interpreting only with information transfer reinforce a hierarchical and ideological status for functional linguistics by locating meaning ‘in’ language’s linguistic structures rather than representing meaning as the outcome of language use in social interaction. This entrenched linguistic paradigm in the field of interpreting contributes to maintaining a particular social co-construction of a timespace (technically, a *chronotope*) in which, for instance, the dominant culture of “Hearing people” maintains status, privilege, and access to resources that Deaf people are still usually denied. In contrast, the related field of literary translation studies has escaped the narrow functional linguistic paradigm and developed very sophisticated ideas about language as a field of equality where authors and characters from minority and oppressed groups can ‘talk back’ to privileged characters and majority language audiences (e.g., Gentzler, 2001; Tymoczko, 2007, 2010; Venuti, 1998). In other words, translation studies has moved beyond linguistics, *per se*, to emphasize the interplay of language use among alert interpretees. This dissertation research investigates why interpreting studies has been so stagnant in comparison, especially since simultaneous interpretation as a professional practice was formalized a couple of decades before literary translation began to establish academic credibility.

1.2 Consciousness

The disparate development of interpreting studies and translation studies necessarily draws attention to aspects of consciousness. Situating myself as a researcher-practitioner involves acknowledging that participant-observation dates from my introduction to the Deafworld in 1988, even though (at the time) I did not have the

academic framing to provide such labels or comprehend that I was already doing some version of action research. The '80s was a time of tremendous upheaval in the profession of ASL/English interpretation and in the overall empowerment of Deaf people. For instance, the famous “Deaf President Now” uprising occurred at Gallaudet College in 1988, an historical peak in a cultural movement against the pathological view that disables and medicalizes deafness. Jankowski (2002) describes the rhetorical moment of Deaf President Now in *Deaf Empowerment*: “If the predominately hearing Congress and media could understand and endorse the rationale for the protest, then the conflict was between the protesters and the paternalistic plantation owners, rather than between Deaf and hearing people” (p. 125).

The Deaf President Now historical moment in post-secondary education accompanied a pedagogical movement in elementary and secondary education at residential schools for the Deaf that was insisting on equality between the languages of (written) English and (visual-gestural) American Sign Language. The Bilingual-Bicultural (Bi-Bi) pedagogy sprang from Deaf activism at The Learning Center for Deaf Children in Massachusetts and the Indiana School for the Deaf and, notably, incorporated many non-deaf “hearing” allies (e.g., Mahshie, 1995). The ally concept became prominent in sign language simultaneous interpretation as an outcome of heated struggle since the 1970s regarding the disenfranchisement of the American Deaf community from the (US) national professional organization they had been instrumental in creating in the 1960s (e.g., Fant, 1990).

In 1986, Baker-Shenk published an article on “oppressor characteristics” targeted at the “hearing heritage” (p. 44) of (most) sign language interpreters, introducing

processes of stigmatization (Goffman, 1963) based on assuming the audiological function of hearing as the standard way of being human and drawing other parallels with stereotyping based on ethnocentric assumptions of superiority. She concludes:

We need more creative alternatives than the pendulum swing from interpreter paternalism to interpreter machine offers. We need a more humane model which is sensitive to the socio-political realities of the deaf community—which neither exploits those realities (paternalism model) nor ignores them (machine model). (Baker-Shenk, 1986, p. 53)

This is the first mention, in print, of the machine model. It arose from her observation of “the theme of ‘interpreter control’ occur[ing] again and again...suggest[ing] the presence of paternalism and a pejorative view of deaf people shown in a lack of respect for their language and linguistic rights” (p. 52)

Baker-Shenk’s article followed on the heels of the refusal in 1983 of the national organization, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), to recognize ASL as an official language, a vote which occurred at the tail end of a raging controversy about the certification of oral interpreters (who do not use ASL but are trained in making spoken English visible on the lips). Fant explains, “Oral interpretation was far less an issue about needed services than it was one of who decided what” (1990, p. 37). The power struggle in RID continued through the 1990s with an offshoot series of *Allies* conferences (mainly in New England, which is RID’s Region 1, e.g., Kent, 2007) and the competitive

development of an interpreter credential by the National Association of the Deaf.² During the late 1990s and 2000s, RID embarked on a strategic course of reconciliation, eventually establishing a Deaf Advisory Council, a permanent Board position for a Deaf Member-at-Large and hiring a Deaf Executive Director for only the third time in the half-century since its founding.³

This brief chronology touches a few highlights of the American Deaf community's journey to voice. Voice is a sociolinguistic concept regarding the achievement of a desired uptake of communication (Blommaert, 2005). Voice is, therefore, a central concern of everyone involved in simultaneously-interpreted communication. One reason to highlight the Deaf voice here is as an example of the collective development of discursive consciousness. Giddens (1979) described the difference between "practical consciousness, as tacit stocks of knowledge which actors draw upon in the constitution of social activity, and ... 'discursive consciousness', involving knowledge which actors are able to express on the level of discourse" (p. 5). Giddens explains that the transition of practical consciousness to discursive consciousness occurs through reflection, and may involve a period of collective struggle.

² "MY understanding of RID and NAD [National Association of the Deaf] and NIC [National Interpreter Certification] is that Marcella M Meyer, founder of GLAD (Greater Los Angeles Council on Deafness) back in the 80's had an issue with RID certifying interpreters and the membership issue, feeling like there was a monopoly within RID. She went toe to toe with them and signed a 'lease' with NAD to certify interpreters. When that 'lease' expired, NAD and RID combined and then became NIC. You can google Marcella Meyer or GLAD and look at her tribute page, and see if you can glean more info. At least that's how I remember it." Connie Schultz, Facebook email, April 20, 2013 [personal correspondence].

³ "Shane H. Feldman, M.S., CAE was named the new Executive Director by the RID Board of Directors on November 29, 2012" (RID Views, p. 25 Winter 2013).

For the Deaf community in the United States, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf provided a focal point for concentrating the collective struggle from indigenous tacit knowledge of ‘how to be Deaf’ to the discursive knowledge necessary for training others in the Deaf Way. W.E.B. Dubois’ (1903/1979) concept of double consciousness is also implicated by Deaf people telling non-deaf/hearing interpreters about aspects of privilege and dominance that hearing interpreters may be unable (or unwilling) to perceive. During the 1980s and 1990s, sign language interpreters were constantly challenged to create conditions for the performance of Deaf identity and Deaf cultural values during interpreted communication. Empowerment was practically a daily topic of conversation within the profession (especially at residential schools for the Deaf); however at that time the remedies were unclear and even a bit mysterious.

1.2.1 The Machine Model of Interpreting

Du Bois described double consciousness as “a peculiar sensation...this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others” (1903/1994, p. 45). The experience Du Bois describes of the American Negro’s hyper-awareness of whites looking down from a (supposedly) superior stance parallels some descriptions of Deafhood. “Hell, it’s our world too!” exclaims Ben Bahan (1989, p. 47), asking pointedly, “What right do hearing people have to impose on us the dominance of their world?” Bahan’s indignation was aroused (in one instance) by a waitress at a roadside diner whose routine assumption that he should learn to verbalize English illustrates the legacy of how hearing people exert control, both historically as well as in the present.

For instance, hearing people control language and educational policies,⁴ provide or fail to provide communication accessibility,⁵ and promote medical interventions.⁶ Some of these attitudes of privilege and its accompanying exercise of power have been conceptualized as audism (attributed to Humphries, 1975;⁷ Lane, 1992) and oralism (Ladd, 2003). It turns out that ASL/English interpreters are very often carriers of these oppressive attitudes (e.g., McDermid, 2009), sometimes even despite being aware of their adverse effects.

⁴ The 1880 ban on signed languages from the Milan conference initiated a century of severe linguistic repression (Gannon, 1981). In the US, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 opened a crack for the re-emergence of ASL in residential schools for the Deaf. Later, the 1990 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990) re-emphasized the rights of individuals with legally-defined disabilities.

⁵ The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended 2008; The Robert T. Stafford Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Fair Housing Act; Architectural Barriers Act; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Olmstead; and the Telecommunications Act of 1996 are all supposed to guarantee communication accessibility for the culturally Deaf as well as for people who lose their hearing due to aging or accident.

⁶ Cochlear implants were originally understood by the culturally Deaf as a form of medical genocide, in which the will of hearing people to force Deaf people to communicate via speech and sound overrides the equally natural capacity to communicate via manual gestures and sight. Now, after hundreds of thousands of children have already received implants and grown up with varying degrees of integration in the “Hearing” world, Deaf communities embrace people with implants while still questioning the morality of the medical practice.

⁷ “According to an article in Capital D Magazine (vol. 1, issue 1) (now apparently defunct), Tom Humphries invented the word “audism” in 1975 to mean an attitude that people who hear and speak, or have good English are superior. This applies whether the person who hears and speaks is deaf or hearing. I remember that when I was in my early teens, I liked a deaf girl who was strong ASL, but someone else (hearing) put down the girl because she was strong ASL and weak in English.” (Berke, 2011).

It was the overwhelming evidence of oralist and audist attitudes that originally inspired Baker-Shenk to write about the machine model of interpreting as a problem of interpreter ethics (1986, 1992). The Deaf community agreed, adopting the term and extending the machine model criticism to the inadequate ASL fluency of many interpreters who were supposedly qualified (or at least allowed to work as if they were). “Let me clarify my use of the term ‘machine’ model,” writes Baker-Shenk seven years after introducing it. “I first used this term at the 1985 RID Convention...since then, it has been used in a different way, specifically referring to the linguistic process of word-for-sign or sign-for-word, machine-like transliteration” (1992, p. 123). Transliteration tends to ignore grammatical differences between ASL and English, imposing an English structure by attributing a one-to-one correspondence of meaning between English words and ASL signs. Sign choices are biased toward a preferred or most common English definition regardless of the semantic range of the sign in American Sign Language (ASL). The mechanical quality experienced by Deaf people watching transliterations is based on a disconnect between the interpreter’s semantic production and the customary flow of communication among equally fluent users of ASL (e.g., Kannapell, 1989).

This amalgamation in Deaf criticism of signed language interpreters as performance machines is curious: it reveals a tangle of linguistics and social interaction. Unethical interpreter behavior accompanies linguistic misproduction and vice-versa. In other words, the focus of critique on interpreters’ linguistic renderings (which need to be fluent in order to transfer information), implicates the dimension of social interaction, because how one handles the ambiguities of meaning influences the identities and relationships of interpretees with each other and with interpreters (following Turner

2007).⁸ What the Deaf naming of the machine model of simultaneous interpretation accomplishes is to challenge the norms of social interaction in this special kind of intercultural communication, while also questioning the standards for linguistic production.

Baker-Shenk explains her original use of “the term ‘machine’ model ... was to describe the interpreter’s role...functioning...ethically...as machines. This machine model clearly reveals the basic tendencies of people in power (the dominant class) both to deny the reality of their power and to deny that power is part of what’s going on in **every** situation” (emphasis in original, 1992, p. 123-124). One purpose of this dissertation is to extend the Deaf voice beyond the professionally-defined interpreter’s role⁹ to encompass the ethical behavior of the other interpretees as well, namely the hearing people involved in the intercultural interaction.

It may seem obvious that the signed language interpreter was never operating alone, that they/we are aided and abetted (one could say) by the culture shared with the hearing interpretees who are involved in each and every interpreted communication. The point is to stretch the scope of social interaction beyond the dyadic unit of an interpreter and a single interpretee (whether the source or the receiver) to a group-level view

⁸ The term in traditional usage is interlocutor. I follow Turner’s (2007) lead in preferring the label of interpretee because it clarifies the relative positions of all participants within the scene of interpreted communication, without obscuring the reality that interpreters are also sometimes interlocutors, that is, “someone who takes part in a dialogue or conversation” (Oxford Dictionary online, retrieved 26 March 2014).

⁹ The idea of an interpreter functioning in an isolated, discrete or invisible role was first challenged in theoretical terms by sign language interpreting researchers Cynthia Roy (1989, 1993, 2000) and Melanie Metzger (1995, 1999) and then by spoken language interpreting researcher Claudia Angelelli (2001, 2003).

encompassing all of the participants in the interpreted interaction. This move is theoretically necessary for interpreting studies to move beyond the functional linguistic paradigm. Paradigm growth may also signal a further stage in Deaf empowerment by supporting the continued evolution of Deafhood-centered agency through the exercise of Deaf voice that is enhanced by interpretation rather than diminished by it.

Developing voice and agency within a field of linguistic equality measured by the quality of social interaction during interpreted communication is conjecture.¹⁰ For now, the practical move is to cultivate discursive consciousness and elicit increased responsibility among interpretees for noticing and engaging proactively with the dynamics of simultaneous interpretation (SI). There will be mistakes that are not noticed (such as also always occur in same language communication). But often there are non-verbal cues and other behavioral indicators (such as deviations from the patterns of social interaction or responses that are unexpected or non-sensible in the context) which could be acted upon by an alert and conscientious interpretee. Not following up on cues that are noticed replicates and reifies social inequality.

1.2.2 Interpreting Makes Timespace Apparent

There is a lot going on during simultaneous interpretation. Immersion into ASL and the Deafworld provides a macrosocial backdrop for some of the microsocial dynamics that repeatedly play out during interpreted interaction. I was an English monolingual when I had my first significant encounter with simultaneous interpretation

¹⁰ “Fields of equality” are a theoretical construct from economist Amartya Sen (1992). The notion of a linguistic field of equality constructed through skillful and strategic use of simultaneous interpretation is one of the contributions of this dissertation.

in 1989.¹¹ I had joined an activist lesbian group and became intrigued that non-deaf “hearing” members of our political initiative seemed incapable of following the simple instructions for using an interpreter. Two deaf lesbians involved with the group were willing to scribble English with me on notepaper or napkins; sometimes we were lucky and allowed to grab a few minutes of a professional interpreter’s downtime. To my surprise, I started to recognize vocabulary and was soon able to remember many signs well enough to begin to express some of my own ideas. Without hesitation I sought to learn American Sign Language well.

Although I did not set out to become a professional ASL/English interpreter, training opportunities and encouragement from friends and colleagues at the Indiana School for the Deaf drew me along that career path. Twenty-three years later I find myself still fascinated by the challenges of simultaneous interpreting and thrilled by its fringe benefits; especially the regular exposure to new places, diverse peoples, novel ideas, and alternate ways of being. This background is important because it shapes how I approached research into the system of spoken language simultaneous interpretation at the European Parliament in 2005 and again in 2008-2009.¹²

Being an interpreter provides an odd vantage point because interpreters are, according to convention, ‘not supposed to be there.’ In my own professional work and as

¹¹ Junior high school classes in Spanish did provide me some exposure but I have, to date, not pursued fluency and can barely handle rudimentary conversation.

¹² The 2008-2009 trip was funded by a Fulbright scholarship. The 2005 trip was sponsored through the Anthropology Department’s European Field Studies Program and jointly funded by the Anthropology Department, Communication Department, and the School of Behavioral and Social Science at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

a researcher, I have continued to observe interpretees being unable to use the interpreting process well. Over the years, I have come to understand that a major reason is this norm of pretending the interpreter is invisible. This seems particularly true for hearing people communicating with the Deaf: it is quite common to observe hearing people misunderstanding and misusing the interpreting process, sometimes even despite their supposed or professed familiarity with simultaneous interpretation.

Specifically, many non-deaf, non-signing people (who are grouped together as “Hearing People” from the Deaf point-of-view because of our attachment to sound, especially to auditory language) seem not to *see* visual-gestural language. That is, signing does not always appear to register it in cognitive consciousness: all the physically expressive motion of ASL does not appear to register in awareness as *talking*, that is, as equivalent to the sound of a voice. Eventually, I also came to realize that Deaf people frequently do not achieve the most that they could from this unique practice of intercultural communication. These puzzles led to research questions regarding the general conditions of interpreted communication: where did they originate? How are they evaluated? Who is responsible for identifying and establishing the conditions required for effective interpreted communication, and when, how, and by whom are these conditions evaluated and adjusted when necessary?

Fieldwork with spoken language interpreting shows that many of the issues flagged by Deaf criticism about simultaneous interpretation also appear in the discourses about simultaneous interpretation (SI) at the European Parliament. There may be nuances in the criticisms of interpreters and interpreting at the EP that depend somewhat upon the language(s) in use, however the findings show that there is not much difference in the

criticisms of SI in the EP from larger/more common languages and those of language users from smaller/less common languages. It is interesting that such relative balance in user-generated criticism of simultaneous interpreters does not hold between spoken English and ASL.

Instead, most hearing users of signed/spoken language simultaneous interpretation are remarkably uncritical. In contrast with the (hearing) users of spoken/spoken language simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament, if hearing interpretees say anything about the sign language interpreting process, they tend to wax poetic in their praise of the sign language interpreter and/or carry on about the beauty of the signed language.¹³ Deaf users of simultaneous interpretation, however, regularly critique ASL/English interpreters for failing to mediate the social interaction in such a way as to enable them to *remain culturally Deaf* during the communication process. The preservation of cultural characteristics and linguistic distinctions during interpreted communication is actually discouraged at the European Parliament: such displays are often understood as a kind of nationalism. A permanent official (in the Parliament's civil service) wryly commented, "Some people love their languages more than others" (F25).

Usually, cultural criticism by Deaf persons is aimed at linguistic dysfluency or a specific action or inaction by the interpreter in relation to mediating the interpersonal dynamics in a culturally satisfactory manner; often both. The point to be emphasized here is that, while Deaf people are interested in the information exchange they are also

¹³ E.g., this glorifying attitude was glaringly evident in tweets about ASL/English interpreter Lydia Callis interpreting for Mayor Bloomberg in New York City during public emergency warnings in advance of Hurricane Sandy (October 2012), and subsequently exaggerated by spoofs on *Saturday Night Live* and Jon Stewart's *Daily Show*.

interested (sometimes even more so) in the cultural flow of the interaction, its structure of feeling (Williams, 1977). A disconnect in perceptions between the Deaf viewpoint and the perspective of many professional signed language interpreters (who, like me, tend to believe that we do a very hard job as well as we can) is what initially focused my researcher's gaze. In the last few years, scholarship has begun to confirm that bringing Deafhood (Ladd, 2003) into an interpreted interaction requires the interpreter's investment in ensuring mutual understanding (Adam, Carty, & Stone, 2011; Forestal, 2011; Kent, 2013; Stone, 2009). The intensity of Deaf concern over the loss or suppression of culture during interpreted interaction led me to wonder about parallels and contrasts in the European Parliament.

The challenge does seem to arise for the Deaf when the participants in simultaneously-interpreted communication events, referred to in most literature as interlocutors but labelled here interpretees, are taught to proceed to communicate with each other as if the interpreter is not there. Not only does this fly in the face of the obvious, but it builds a strong constraint against acknowledging the interpreter at all. Deaf people can be very critical of the interpreter INTERRUPTING¹⁴ to ask for clarification or repetition and can be angered when they perceive an interpreter TAKING OVER (Kent 2004). These management behaviors of the interpreter by Deaf interpretees occur in relation with other targets of Deaf criticism, which are contextualized by an extensive history of prejudice and discrimination from Hearing People, including outright

¹⁴ Written English glosses of semantically-rich ASL signs are usually represented by ALL CAPS. Capital letters signify the English word that is most accurate to the semantic meaning associated with an ASL sign in the given context of use. Synonyms are possible.

oppression (e.g., Gannon, 1991; Ladd, 2003; Moore & Levitan, 2003; Padden & Humphries, 1988; Wilcox, 1989) and (what is perceived by many as) medical genocide.¹⁵ The fact that most interpreters, by definition, come from the majority Hearing culture endows the matter of ‘ensuring *mutual* understanding’ among interpretees with layers of complication. The expectation exists that interpreters *should* understand (automatically, naturally); intentionally ignoring the interpreter is a norm that seems to make sense in signed language interpretation just as it does in spoken language interpreting at the European Parliament.

1.3 Origins of Simultaneous Interpretation

As noted above, Deaf people have been criticizing sign language interpreters’ disengagement from *ensuring* mutual understanding soon after the field began to professionalize, gaining momentum in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Baker-Shenk, 1986, 1992). It turns out that the model of simultaneous interpretation adopted by sign language interpreters is premised upon a system Peter Uiberall says was “crafted by trial and error in an attic room of the Nuremberg Palace of Justice” (Gaiba, 1998, p. 13). An interpreter who worked extensively during the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal, Uiberall was the first interpreter to be cited regarding the implementation of the electronic technology that made simultaneous interpretation possible. His comment refers explicitly to the human

¹⁵ At its most basic, cochlear implants are justified by pathologizing deafness and glorifying the sense of sound. Cochlear implants have had the effect of making mainstreaming more possible through, in the United States, the idea of “the least restrictive environment” (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, amended 2004). The result has been devastating to residential schools for the Deaf, which provided the institutional container for the birth and development of American Deaf Culture (e.g. Edwards, 2012).

component required to complete the newly patented Filene-Finlay parallel processing machinery in order to make it functional for immediate social interaction.

The historic context of the invention and use of the system of simultaneous interpretation is detailed by Francesca Gaiba in *The Origins of Simultaneous*

Interpretation: The Nuremberg Trial:

There is much disagreement about the trial, concerning its *raison d'être*, its fairness, its being or not “victors’ justice.” On one thing, however, there is consensus: the trial would not have been possible without the simultaneous interpretation into four languages. (p. 27)

Gaiba’s comprehensive overview of the invention and original use of simultaneous interpretation begins to fill an enormous gap in scholarship about the Nuremberg Trial. My task is to build from her description and present an argument about the extent, reach, and consequences of that historic consensus. It remains widely celebrated that simultaneous interpreting enabled the fair and equal participation of French, German, Russian and English witnesses, judges, jurors, legal counsel and observers. In addition to agreement about the necessity of simultaneous interpreting for the occasion of the international war crimes tribunal, there was also unquestioned acceptance that the interpreter’s function was just one among many of the invisible components of an electronic machine. This dissertation explores and critiques the normative outcomes from seventy years of implementing the system of simultaneous interpretation as it was invented and validated at Nuremberg.

Today, the European Union is the world’s largest user of simultaneous interpretation services. The system in use at the main EU institutions (the European Commission, the European Court of Justice, the European Parliament) is directly descended from the model championed at Nuremberg. The Members of the European

Parliament (EP), elected from the official Member States of the European Union, are the main users of the system of simultaneous interpretation in the EP. I had extensive conversations and observations with a diverse, volunteer sample of fifty-five MEPs over the course of one legislative year. I also spoke with permanent administrative and technical support staff.¹⁶ These conversations complemented interviews with official European Parliament Interpreters in 2005 (Kent, 2009).

Using techniques from the ethnography of communication and critical discourse analysis, I sought to learn about the use of simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament (SI in the EP) as experienced and understood by its performers and participants. I was immediately struck by similarities in patterns of talk. For one thing, interpreters and users talking about SI in the EP expressed many similar sentiments about interpreting as had been said by interpreters and users of SI during and about Nuremberg. I will demonstrate that the continuity of assumptions about the values of simultaneous interpretation, including what it is good for, and how to do it, have not changed from the origins at the international war crimes tribunal in Nuremberg to its present-day implementation in the European Parliament. These unquestioned values and assumptions have extended problematically to everyday life, as evidenced by sign language community interpreting for the Deaf. I also draw upon Mikhael M. Bakhtin's (1981) theoretical notion of chronotopes, the construction of a sense of time through the use of language, as a means of thinking in practical terms about what geographer David Harvey calls the postmodern condition, involving the collapse of time and space (1990). Modern

¹⁶ Some ninety people participated in these conversational interviews. A back-up glitch resulted in the loss of half the hard data. Field notes from those interviews are consistent with the findings gleaned from the corpus of transcribed interviews.

communication technology allows people in developed parts of the world to communicate with others as if there is no geographical distance and without the intervention of long periods of time waiting for responses. Sometimes this communication access extends even into undeveloped and underdeveloped regions, too.

The historical development of the intercultural communication practice of simultaneous interpretation illustrates how language, language use, and social interaction create and co-create the human experience of time here-and-now: in post-structural post-modernity. Simultaneous interpretation is special in part because, as a unique mode of intercultural communication, the active work of interpretation among people using different languages brings relationships and the shared creation of meaning into view. Identities and social status are explicitly present whenever simultaneous interpretation is used. Skilled practitioners and users of SI in the EP use the interpretation process to alter or maintain power dynamics. Commonalities of complaint about interpreting by two different sets of users, the culturally Deaf and Members of the EP, direct attention to critical problems with positioning the interpreter as a non-participant in interpreted communication.

1.4 Points of Reference: Thinking in Time

The research method and logic of analysis is influenced by Neustadt and May's (1986) argument to politicians and policymakers to make effective use of history by thinking in terms of timestreams.

In thinking of time as a stream, the preeminent challenge is to judge whether change has happened, or is happening, or will. The imperative need is to get that reasonably right. This mode of thought contributes to the chances of doing so by continuously posing comparisons of present with past and future. (p. 256-257)

Tracing timestreams for making strategic decisions guides the organization of this dissertation. Roughly, I take the situation as represented by discourses about interpreting in the European Parliament during its Sixth Term (2004-2009) and trace chains-of-utterances (Bakhtin, 1981) through discourses about interpreting in the American Deaf community to the modern invention of simultaneous interpreting at Nuremberg (1945-1946).

The patterns of talk about spoken language simultaneous interpretation that drew my attention at the European Parliament were primed by exposure to patterns of talk that had already captured my attention in signed language interpreting. The nascent intuition I had was that interpreting makes time visible, and, by doing so, imbues communication with an unusual sense of palpability, raising questions of control and meaning that are usually passed over in everyday life.

1.4.1 Engineering

Interpreting has not previously been considered as an example of the social construction of technology (Bijker, Hughes & Pinch; 1987; Bjiker, 1990). Simultaneous interpretation emerged with the advent of electronic technology patented by Edward Filene and a partner, Albert Finlay, and subsequently developed by IBM.¹⁷ An action learning¹⁸ hypothesis of this dissertation is that discourses of *translation*, that is, any talk and all texts in which the word “translation” is used *when referring to simultaneous*

¹⁷ Today, IBM promotes their involvement as “Pioneering Machine-Aided Translation.” *IBM 100 Icons of Progress*. Retrieved 5 April 2013. <http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/ibm100/us/en/icons/translation/>.

¹⁸ Action learning is described in more detail in chapter two.

interpretation, represents the plurilingual communication processes of interpreted interaction as a kind of mathematics or otherwise amenable to being coded according to a rigid scheme. The generic idea of *translation* is to move something in space without changing its properties.

The notion of translation depends upon the assumption that meaning is an attribute of language that can be moved from one place in space (the source language or person or both combined) to another place (the target language or person or both combined) without alteration. Translation, in this commonsense view, requires a binary source-target dichotomy that necessarily eliminates other factors that bear, significantly, upon the co-construction of shared meaning in real time. These basic assumptions of translation underlie the functional linguistic paradigm that remains predominant in interpreting studies. Evidence of this dominance in the professional practices of interpreting occurs through frequent reference and built-in bias in favour of locating meaning in the source producer/production, disregarding input filters of the receiving target (whether conceptualized as the target language or as an embodied human being) and considering only the immediate, local setting as the contextualizing environment. The presumed fixity of meaning ‘in’ spontaneous source language utterances has not been adequately deconstructed in regard to performances of simultaneous interpretation. Nor has this bias been reframed as relevant to the participation of interpretees during simultaneous interpretation.

When live, spontaneous interpretation among co-present human beings communicating in real (synchronous) time is referred to as translation, the necessity of interpretation is hidden because the intercultural aspects of the communicative interaction

are de-selected. This is an example of what Burke (1966) calls a terministic screen,¹⁹ because the commonsense meaning of “translation” leans in favour of engineering equations, rather than recognizing, say, cultural relativity. (For instance, an algebraic “*transposition*, i.e., the shifting of the terms of an equation from one side to the other, as for instance, the passing from $3X + 7 = 25$ to $3X = 25 - 7$ ” (Dantzig, 1930/2005, p. 80) is assumed as akin to a notion of moving “a meaning” (usually expressed as “*the meaning*”) from the “side” of one language to the “side” of another language. This analogy of a simple equation may be the source for Hatim’s (2001) observation of “a tendency to use linguistics as a scapegoat and as something to blame for the ills that have befallen us” (p. xiv). Hatim is referring specifically to “the discourse” of the research agenda within translation studies (p. xiv), a discourse that typically culminates in the conclusion that “linguistics has all but failed us” (p. xv). This dissertation makes a likewise gesture: that linguistics has ‘all but failed’ interpretation, too, while agreeing with Hatim, who concedes linguistics can retain usefulness as long as it is comprehended as one approach of many within a range of ways for interpretees and interpreters to collaborate in ensuring mutual understanding.

¹⁹ In *Language as Symbolic Action*, Kenneth Burke describes the “terministic screen” in which diction (the choice of this or that word or phrasing) necessarily ‘selects’ an emphasis or framing while ‘de-selecting’ other emphases and framings. “We must use terministic screens, since we cannot say anything without the use of terms; whatever terms we use, they necessarily constitute a corresponding kind of screen; and any such screen necessarily directs the attention to one field rather than another” (1966, p. 50). He continues: “Within that field, there can be different screens, each with its ways of directing the attention and shaping the range of observations implicit in the given terminology. All terminologies must implicitly or explicitly embody choices between the principle of continuity and the principle of discontinuity” (p. 50). At stake during SI is whose continuity will be supported or dropped, and which discontinuities will be tended to or ignored.

The reality of influences on the cultural aspects of simultaneous interpretation is more geometrical (one could say spherical) than linear algebra or the traditional versions of functional linguistics allow. The research collected in this dissertation shows how the accretion of discourse about interpreting has severely constrained the professional performances of interpreters *and interpretees*, effecting the cultural practices of participating in SI. This embedded engineering imagery may have inhibited the field of Interpreting Studies from evolving in the more sophisticated ways demonstrated by theory in literary translation, and kept interpretees, particularly those from linguistic minority cultures, from reliably attaining achievements of voice. Perhaps the reticence of interpreting scholars, trainers, and practitioners to engage the unforeseen consequences of relying exclusively on linguistic models has also delayed translators from making more progress on Bassnett and Levefre's (1998) call for translators to study cultural interaction.

1.4.1.1 Prediction, Risk and Engineering Safety

Engineers require prediction in order to design appropriate controls that reduce risk and uncertainty in order to maintain engineering safety (Petroski, 1992). Historically and today, language is used as a tool for control over others. Historically, for instance, in instituting nationalism (Anderson, 1992) and recently in the English Only movement in the United States (e.g., Olson, 1991). Language is also used to enact resistance and demonstrate opposition to being controlled (e.g., Sibii, 2003, 2006), and to promote or argue against any social movement. Postcolonial scholarship in particular cases (i.e., bilingualism in North Africa, Mehrez, 1992) shows how to “transform plurilingualism and translation into radical elements that defy compartmentalization and pre-existing hierarchies by constantly moving and migrating” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 195). In other

words, translation (which, from the point-of-view of their field, includes/subsumes interpretation), is a means for generating conditions that enhance the possibility of exercising voice (Blommaert, 2005), and may be a medium for creating linguistic fields of equality in the capabilities approach called for by Amartya Sen (1992).

This dissertation's findings illustrate how opportunities for voice-enhancing creativity by interpreters during simultaneous interpretation are resisted by discourses that equate interpreter agency with the loss of control by interpretees. These engineering-like discourses are notable for their insistence on privileging the source language, yet also for their adverse effects on the interpretees, whose assumptions about risk and uncertainty are measured by how effectively the interpreter remains invisible. In other words, making it seem *as if* no differences are present or operative during intercultural interaction has been made more important than acknowledging differences and, therefore, addressing them when needed.

1.4.2 Control

Control is fundamental to communication processes and social organizing: culturally as well as institutionally. Simultaneous interpreting raises concerns about control depending on the position, perspective, and disposition of social actors. Understanding what can and cannot be controlled, and how to institute appropriate controls in order to provide boundaries and limits for interpreting as an institutional practice, are topics largely avoided by professional practitioners and researchers, with the notable exception of Dean and Pollard's (2001) Demand-Control Schema. Demand-Control Schema (DC-S) is a 'work analysis' framework for signed language interpreters that details a set of 'controls' that interpreters can use within the range of 'demands'

presented by interpretees. In this prescriptive model, the controls are ‘professional practice skills’ to be exercised by the individual interpreter. DC-S has the capacity to deal with larger system issues if interpretees and interpreters use it together to evaluate work effectiveness and ethics. In this regard, DC-S provides a way to contextualize institutional elements and intercultural factors organizing interpreted interactions.

Unlike most models of interpreting which focus exclusively on linguistic tasks (as critiqued by Hatim, 2001; Gentzler, 2001; for an early example of a model for sign language interpreters, see Ingram, 1974),²⁰ the Demand-Control Schema acknowledges the managerial functions of the interpreter’s task, outlining four demand categories (environmental, interpersonal, paralinguistic, and intrapersonal) and three sets of control opportunities (pre-, during, and post-assignment) (Dean & Pollard, 2013, pp. 5, 19). The premises of DC-S originate in research and guidelines for occupational safety (Karasek, 1979). Concern with interpreter safety is a recent development;²¹ it is the opposite of the focus of concern at Nuremberg, which was interpreter failure. Within the field of engineering, risks of engineering failure are assessed by measures of engineering safety (Petroski, 1992). The principle of engineering safety does not appear to have been extended to the human beings who completed the circuitry of the IBM system which produced the collapsed-time possibility of (so-called) “simultaneous” interpreting.

²⁰ A collection of interpreting models for sign language interpreters is being collected in a forthcoming volume, *The Sign Language Interpreting Studies Reader*, Roy & Napier (Eds.).

²¹ Interpreter safety may have been a fleeting concern but Dean & Pollard’s DC-S model quickly moved its focus onto the aspect of Karasak’s model involving work effectiveness and work ethics (Robyn Dean, Facebook chat, 14 December 2012 [personal correspondence]). However the frequency of repetitive motion and overuse injuries in the field is significant (e.g., Peper & Gibney, 1999).

Balancing safety and the risks of failure is a management challenge. The Directorate of Interpretation at the European Parliament is responsible for this function in their administration of the language regime in the EP, which is commonly labelled controlled multilingualism (Podesta, 2001a; 2001b; 2001c). The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) is responsible for this function in their administration of the credentialing system for American Sign Language/English interpreters in the United States; a responsibility now officially shared with the National Association of the Deaf (NAD).²² There are substantive differences between these two types of organizations: the EP is a direct employer of interpreters, while the RID is a professional association of interpreters who are employed by unaffiliated private and governmental entities. RID is challenged to work in partnership with Deaf advocacy organizations,²³ the EP is

²² The National Interpreter Certification (NIC) was launched December 1, 2011. The first performance report, jointly released by NAD and RID on February 20, 2014, is available at <http://www.nad.org/news/2014/2/nad-and-rid-release-performance-report> (retrieved 27 March 2014). The report includes both a summary and the full technical report of the certification test's validity and reliability as well as candidate performance results during the first testing cycle. The results of a 2002 Role Delineation Study and a 2011 Job/Task Analysis Survey are included as supporting documentation.

²³ Along with the NAD, RID is a member of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network (DHHCAN), which includes the American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB), American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association (ADARA), American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC), Association of Late-Deafened Adults (ALDA), Cerebral Palsy and Deaf Organization, Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD), Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD), Deaf Seniors of America (DSA), Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Government, Gallaudet University (GU), Gallaudet University Alumni Association (GUAA), Hearing Loss Association of America, National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA), National Catholic Office of the Deaf (NCOD), Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TDI), and the USA Deaf Sports Federation (USADSF). RID's Government Affairs Program (GAP) also works with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Alliance and the National Interpreter Association Coalition. (Source:

structured to operate in tandem with other formal governing institutions of the European Union. Hence, control is exercised by each organization with different sets of formal and informal means. What the organizational structures have in common, however, is the need to establish and maintain control of a communication process involving people from different cultural backgrounds using different languages.

One of the moves in this dissertation is to treat the discourse of the research agenda in interpreting studies as parallel with the commonsense discourse of users of SI (the interpretees) and also with the common sense discourse of most trained practitioners (the interpreters). Few members of these groups, it should be noted (including interpreting researchers), are educated (as yet) about social theory in general, let alone communication theory, cultural studies or postcolonial theory. The concept of “parallel process” comes from a psychoanalytic tradition of group relations theory.²⁴ Parallel processes²⁵ occur in “microcosm groups” composed by members of salient identity groups and organization groups (Alderfer & Smith, 1982, p. 40). The notion as applied here is that the salient members of discourses about interpreting, namely interpreters and interpretees, include persons with a range of ascribed and achieved identity characteristics. Achieved is used in the sociological sense of having acquired through life

²⁴ Wilfred Bion worked on group relations in the United Kingdom after World War II, at the same time as Kurt Lewin was developing his approach to group dynamics in the United States. Bion’s contributions to psychoanalytic theory are summarized by Bleandonu (1994).

²⁵ In terms of the parallel process concept mentioned previously, what Deaf people are telling community-style interpreters may be a similar message (with similar problematic dynamics) that community interpreters are trying to tell conference interpreters. Likewise, the Deaf discursive consciousness may have significance for users of interpreting services who are experiencing conditions of linguistic inequality despite the accommodation of SI.

circumstances (things that befall a person by accident or chance, such as surviving an accident or winning a lottery) or effort (undergoing training or being a parent). Achieved identities (sometimes called status) are complemented with ascribed identity characteristics, which in this case would include one's native language as well as features of gender, ethnicity, nationality and so forth). This essential heterogeneity is intrinsic to these discourses; members are essentially diverse from each other. They can be constituted as a group only by virtue of a shared cultural activity and practice; their participation, interest and concerns with simultaneous interpretation.

In addition to the achieved characteristics salient to simultaneous interpretation (e.g., researcher, interpreter, interpretee, trainer/teacher) there are also administrators, professional association officers, referral agency personnel, even authors of fiction and directors of film who represent interpreters and interpreting in particular ways.²⁶ There are also discourses that can be described on the basis of ascribed characteristics, such as the Deaf who use signed languages, the influx of Eastern Europeans into the European Parliament in 2005, majority language users such as English monolinguals, as well as discourses based on nationality, gender and others. In general, these more particular discourse strands are not teased out in detail, although features that suggest them are present. This action research did not note particular relevance of traditional demographic (ascribed) characteristics, and does not draw particular conclusions on the basis of

²⁶ Diriker (2004) names five meta-discourses about simultaneous interpretation: general reference books, codes of ethics, professional organizations, academia, and the media. The discourse analysed here does not fall neatly into one of these categories: it is a discourse of practitioners and users/participants including elements which could originate in one or more of Diriker's meta-discourse categories.

national boundaries per se. One rough division is noted between the so-called “old” and “new” languages, as defined by the boundary of “the big bang enlargement” in 2004.²⁷

1.4.2.1 Establishing a Reference Group

The popularity of Dean & Pollard’s (2001, 2013) Demand-Control Schema suggests that control is very much on interpreters’ minds. However there is no research on how interpreters themselves conceive of control, per se; the closest is a literature on interpreter norms (eg., Chesterman, 2006; Diriker, 2004; Duflou, 2012; Gile, 1999; Harris, 1990; Harris & Sherwood, 1978; Shlesinger, 1989b; Toury, 1995, 1999).²⁸ Community and conference interpreters are the closest reference groups for each other, despite all efforts to compartmentalize them.²⁹ (Merton, 1957; Merton & Kitt, 1957) Likewise, there is no research on the European Parliament’s administrators’ conceptions

²⁷ As described by European Parliament Official Martin Wooding for a story in the *Shanghai Star*, 30 October 2003.

²⁸ An example of a norm that could be understood as a control is provided by Diriker (2004, p. 164). Diriker’s example from an academic conference is compared with similar examples in the European Parliament by Duflou (2012): “... the interpreter learnt to solve the problem of not being able to refer to herself as “I” when ‘on mic’ (i.e. when the microphone is switched on and the interpreter is heard by the users) by speaking about herself as ‘the interpreter’ in order to be able to correct a mistake made earlier” (p. 152).

²⁹ Reference group theory offers ways to understand processes of norming: “Informal preparation for the roles to be performed in connection with future statuses tends to have a distinct character...the individual responds to the cues in behavioral situations, more or less unwittingly draws implications from these for future role behavior, and thus becomes oriented toward a status he [or she, or ze] does not yet occupy. Typically, he does not expressly codify the values and role-requirements he is learning” (Merton, 1957, p. 385).

of controlling interpretation processes,³⁰ let alone the relationship between administrative (i.e., managerial) control of interpreters and the control(s) available to interpreters during work performances. As a thought experiment, extracting the practice and discourse of control regarding simultaneous interpreting from these disparate institutional settings allows comparison by analogy with control in another kind of institution.

Organization scholars (especially within schools for business management) have generated a literature on control in organizations, especially in regard to for-profit businesses where the effectiveness of control is measured by time and cost. Drawing on Follett's (1948) definition of control, Rayat (2011) explains how international business managers construe control as "an exercise of power toward specific ends" (p. 4). First, Rayat notes: "In organization studies, researchers have found that organizational members in different countries tend to attribute different meanings to the same organizational phenomena" (p. 9). Second, researchers "have found differences in both practices of control and preferences for controls in different countries" at the organizational, individual, inter-organization and intra-organizational levels (p. 8). Therefore, "Control cannot be explained just in terms of systems, structures, or policies. In order to understand how control works in organizations, we must attend to what managers, as agents of control in organization, think of their task of control, and their beliefs and values relating to control" (p. 14).

³⁰ There is a series of articles justifying the design and implementation of "controlled multilingualism" as the language regime for interpretation in the Parliament (Podesta 2001a, 2001b, 2001c). These are descriptive and rhetorical pieces offering justifications for, not an analysis of, the conceptions of control upon which the system is based. The argumentation is predominantly financial.

According to Rayat (2011), organizational researchers “agree that control is an important function of management, yet they do not expound how the notion of control fits into managers’ wider expectations, experiences and understanding of management” (p. 2). This knowledge gap seems quite analogous to the absence of understanding of control by interpreters and interpretees during interpreted interaction. When control in organizations has been studied, the academic gaze has tended to emphasize the perspective of those being controlled (i.e., employees), disregarding, for instance, “the value attributions made by managers” (p. 2). Roughly, one can perceive a sense of ‘being controlled’ in the discourse of Deaf consumers as they critique signed language interpreters as well as by the Members of the EP who are consumers of its controlled multilingualism interpreting regime. These broad strokes of commonality justify considering managers of international business as a reference group for simultaneous interpreters (and vice-versa, but that argument is not made here).

1.4.2.2 Disclaimer: Comparison Groups

Conference and community interpreters are presented as reference groups for each other explicitly for the purposes of comparison and contrast with people talking about (and performing) interpreting from other (non-professional) positions. Literature on simultaneous interpretation typically segregates two types of SI, conference interpreting and community interpreting, as if they have little in common. Signed Language interpreting with the Deaf community is presented here as an exemplar of so-called community interpreting, and interpreting with Members of the European Parliament is presented here as the exemplar of so-called conference interpreting. Both are exemplars of simultaneous interpreting (not consecutive interpreting, in which interpreters take

notes and render interpretations in an explicit, non-overlapping, turn-taking sequence with original speakers and intended receivers). The division between conference and community interpreting has heretofore served as a convenient way to build discrete bodies of knowledge within a high degree of shared boundary conditions (the institutional setting, social class statuses of participants, legal requirements, etc.). However the activities of interpreting, its performances, practices, and modes of cultural production, are represented within this dissertation as more alike than dissimilar, despite the traditionally-understood distinction. In this view, the boundary conditions used to distinguish between community and conference styles of interpreting are superficial characteristics that are exceeded by more fundamental shared characteristics and outcomes of interpreted social interaction.³¹

1.4.3 Conference Interpreting : Community Interpreting

The institutional setting of interpreted events has been used to carve up the field of SI practitioners in terms of resources and prestige. “Conference” interpreting is usually posed in contrast with “community” interpreting, and conference interpreters have generally received more training and more prestige than their counterparts working in the everyday world of social services, public education, medical appointments, court cases,

³¹ This assertion of essential similarity is the opposite of the conclusion drawn by Angelelli (2000) when she applied Hymes’ taxonomy of speaking to compare a community interpreting event with a conference interpreting event. “The analysis suggests that there are more differences than similarities between the two settings” (p. 580). She and I do agree that it is important to intervene in the “blind transfer” (p. 580) of conference interpreting standards to community interpreting, which is what makes her emphasis on differences sensible.

employment situations and emergency response.³² The terms of distinction are instructive and a target for critique.

The conference interpreting style in the European Parliament is descended directly from the Nuremberg precedent. It generally adheres to a translation ideal that “historically...has valorized translations that measure up to some ideal by smoothing over contradictions, and has ignored or dismissed those which do not seem to cohere. Such a practice, in turn, affects that which gets produced” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 200). Community-style interpreting has been indirectly influenced by the Nuremberg precedent through the process of professionalization. To some extent, community SI has escaped the full force of conference-style systemic constraints. Although struggle has been necessary to mold this relative looseness³³ in community SI to support a broader range of voices during SI, this struggle (epitomized here by the American Deaf community’s struggle from practical to discursive consciousness and then to voice) brings the double constitution of language use and the social co-construction of reality into view.

Gentzler (2001) explains it like this:

In the act of reproducing the textual relations (of the original text), a double constitution becomes quite lucid: the language restraints imposed by the receiving culture are enormous, yet the possibility of creating new relations in the present are also vivid - not just the old relations transported to a new time and place, but also a myriad of signifying

³² The role of research in establishing the profession of community interpreting as a distinct domain within Interpreting Studies is the subject of the 4th volume from the triennial *Critical Link* international community interpreting conferences (Wadensjö, Dimitrova & Nilsson, 2007), in particular the chapter, “Critical linking up: kinships and convergence in interpreting studies” (Pöhhacker, 2007).

³³ Technically, “interpretive flexibility” (Kline & Pinch, 1996). This concept, associated with the social construction of technology, will be described in chapter six.

practices that both reinforce and alter present signifying practices. In fact, the process of translation and the process of construction of our own identities may be analogous: as translations are subject to at least the two semiotic systems (source and target languages) but are nevertheless capable of changing those very structures, so we, as humans, are the subjects of a variety of discourses but are also free to change those relations that condition our existence. (p. 200)

Gentzler's formulation encapsulates the cultural turn in translation studies, which is just beginning to reach among scholars and practitioners in Interpreting Studies. This dissertation speculates this delay may be due to the way interpreting was socially-constructed under the sway of an engineering discourse emphasizing control.

1.4.4 Interpreting is Not Translation: i.e., Temporal Matters (synchronicity vs asynchronicity)

One way to understand the essential difference between interpretation and translation as cultural productions is to apply Marshall McLuhan's (1964) insight about communication technologies: the medium is the message.³⁴ The standard distinction, that translation is written and interpretation live is both too simplistic and exactly the point. The frozen quality of words written in a permanent form³⁵ puts readers in a specific zone of asynchronous relationship with the other participants in the communication process. The author(s), translator(s) and readers are usually not together in either time or space: they are typically scattered about in more-or-less random places which may or may not

³⁴ The English word "message" is problematized in the last chapter and Appendix F.

³⁵ "Seleskovitch considers the form of the source text as constituting the key difference; written translation is static, allowing analysis and reflection before the text is reformulated in another language, whereas the text to be interpreted will only be heard once, and what one will remember of the text is its content and meaning, not its form (1978: 2)" (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 55).

even be in the same geographic location where the author wrote or the translator translated. Readers and translators are engaged with the text after the time the author has written, and at different times than when other members of the audience are reading it.³⁶ Characteristically and classically, translation involves relatively few overlaps in timespace.

In contrast with the essentially solitary activity of writing or reading a written text, the experience of participating as an interpretee in simultaneous interpretation puts one in the midst of a spontaneous and dynamic communication process.³⁷ Typically, interpretees are in the same physical space, or conditions are created so as to seem ‘together’ through the use of sophisticated technology (such as video relay services which enable signed and spoken language interpretation between Deaf people and non-signing hearing persons). Simultaneous interpretation has time boundaries in the present: there is a starting and endpoint, you are ‘here’ and ‘now’ (present in body, with others) and may (or may not) achieve voice depending on the attention and focus of your mind, rhetorical skills, and familiarity with the norms of social interaction in the specific setting.

³⁶ This insight about the mediation of time goes back (in Western thought) to Aristotle, via Plato. “Otto Kade (1968: 35) and Reiss & Vermeer (1984) regard the opportunity to make corrections as the key feature distinguishing written translation from interpreting” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 56).

³⁷ See Streeck and Jordan (2009), “Communication as a dynamical self-sustaining system” addresses “the importance of time scales and nested contexts.” Also, “Gile [1993: 74-75] suggests...there are qualitative features that differentiate written translation from interpreting. Since interpreting is intended for the immediate use of the recipients, Gile assumes that they do not expect the same kind of terminological accuracy as they would in a written translation, nor can they expect the same kind of polished style as in a written translation (cf Toury [who argues there are different systems and strategies in addition to different modes of written and oral translation] (1995:235))” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 56, 55)

(Recordings that one can watch or listen to afterwards shift the audience member along the relational timespace continuum in the direction of frozen text because the immediate interactive capacity is eliminated.)³⁸ Crucially, and in sharp distinction from translation, interpretation occurs within a relationally-shared timespace.

We will not forget that *at the linguistic level* translators of written texts do sometimes interpret, and simultaneous interpreters sometimes achieve felicitous translations.³⁹ This may be why Vermeer can “[state] that everything he says about translation refers to interpreting, and *vice versa* (1989: 83-83)” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 55). Here is a brief illustration from a prose-poem by Ama Ata Aidoo:

‘Zo vas is zis name, “Sissie”’?

‘Oh, it is just a beautiful way they call “Sister” by people who like you very much. Especially if there are not many girl babies in the family . . . one of the very few ways where an original concept from our old ways has been given expression successfully in English.’

‘Yes?’

‘Yes . . . Though even here, they had to beat in the English word, somehow.’ (Aidoo, 1977, p. 28)

³⁸ The fact of recordability could, perhaps, serve as motivation for interpretees (and interpreters) to more frequently problematize interpretations in the moment. Although such interventions could be framed as disruptions and even edited out of final productions, non-action in moments of confusion or concern about clarity, meaning, or understanding generates the appearance of consent: a false confirmation of shared comprehension.

³⁹ Felicity is a condition of speech acts conceptualized by J.L. Austin in *How to Do Things With Words* (1962). Felicity conditions are those that establish the foundation for achieving voice with any particular speech act.

The closeness of match between languages regarding a particular expression is what distinguishes, linguistically, a “literal” translation from a “free” interpretation. The closer a lexical match, the more translational; the further the reach to establish a connection of some sort, the more interpretive. Nuances of distinction and similarity at these semantic, syntactic, or grammatical levels will generally not be included in this study, which is focused on the interactional level, e.g., the collective and group-level dynamics of engaging the interpreter as a remedy for many kinds of repairs.⁴⁰

Using the terms ‘interpret’ and ‘translate’ as if they are synonyms has effects that will be demonstrated. Analogies from math and engineering serve as metaphors to illustrate the significance of distinctions between translation and interpretation, all in service of demonstrating that the differences are worth serious consideration. In contrast with the linguistic emphasis on control via immediate matching of meaning in the space of interaction, we will focus on the unfolding of meaning in time at the level of relationships as they are co-constructed among interpretees and interpreters through mutual engagement in intercultural communication using simultaneous interpretation.

The theoretical goal is to establish, on the basis of discursive and behavioral evidence, the necessity of valuing and making creative social uses of the timespace components of simultaneous interpretation. Two aspects of temporality have been identified as figural in distinguishing between interpretation and translation. One aspect is the synchrony of participants in interpretation versus the asynchrony of participants in translation. The other aspect is the fixing of meaning in a linguistic now instead of in a

⁴⁰ Technically, transactional level not interaction level. This term is not defined and contrasted with interaction until chapter four. See footnote 201.

continuously-unfolding timestream. The boundary of temporal co-presence and the consciousness of participants in regards to where they locate control (exclusively in the language or equally or moreso in the interaction) outlines the zone of this research. The practical goal of comprehending these temporal features is to produce an argument illustrating that the intercultural communication practice of simultaneous interpretation can be revitalized to serve, institutionally, as a societal-level design intervention for promoting cultural and linguistic diversity in order to counteract time-space compression (Harvey 1990), particularly as it has been generated, via language and language use, by the age of mechanical reproduction (Benjamin 1916/1969 English translation).

1.5 Why the European Parliament?

The European Parliament is the largest and most representative governing institution of the European Union and, in combination with the European Commission, crafts law for the entire EU. The European Parliament (EP) is one of three major institutions of the European Union,⁴¹ and is loosely akin to the United States' Congress, especially in its role of being the political body that is supposed to be representative of

⁴¹ “The EU is the result of decades of integration, from the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) to the establishment of the EEC in 1957 (the Treaty of Rome), to the Single European Act in 1987, to the Maastricht Treaty on the European Union of 1993, and to the latest revised Treaty. The fact that the EU was developed from three communities (the ECSC, the European Atomic Energy Community – Euratom – and the European Economic Community – EEC) is still reflected in the internal functioning of the EU. The three communities have been governed by five institutions: the European Parliament (since 1958), the Council and the Commission (single bodies since 1967), the Court of Justice and the Court of Auditors. They are supported by five bodies: the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the European Ombudsman, the European Investment bank, and, as the most recent addition, the European Central Bank” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 75).

and for the citizens of Europe. While the United Nations also employ a significant number of interpreters, the regular structure for simultaneous interpretation (called a *language regime*)⁴² in the UN encompasses only six official languages.⁴³ In other words, despite the visual appearance of all those delegates from all the countries of the world wearing headphones with which one might assume they are listening to their country's language, UN Delegates are limited to choosing among Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, or Spanish. In the EP, the number of language choices available at the turn of a dial often exceeds twenty,⁴⁴ and can include languages natively spoken by relatively small national populations (e.g., Catalan and other regional languages granted status

⁴² Kroskrity (2000) describes “regimes of language”: “ ‘Regimes’ invokes the display of political domination in all its many forms, including what Gramsci (1971) distinguished as the coercive force of the state and the hegemonic influence of the state-endorsed culture of civil society” (p. 3). Juxtaposing this with the “many senses of ‘language’ that, by contrast, emphasize its form (not its meaning), decontextualize its use, limit its role to providing labels for pre-existing things, and otherwise present language as [an] apolitical, even sometimes asocial, phenomenon....[led to] ‘Regimes of Language,’ as...promis[ing] to integrate two often segregated domains: politics (without language) and language (without politics)” (p. 3). Kroskrity and his colleagues’ move builds upon Bernstein (1975), Gumperz (1962), Hymes (1980), Labov (1972), Bourdieu (1977, 1991) and Foucault (1972, 1980). See also “Spaces of Multilingualism” (Blommaert, Collins & Slembrouck, 2005).

⁴³ The only counterparts at such a multilingual scale as the European Parliament are the Indian and South African Parliaments (Corbett *et al*, 2008, p. 2).

⁴⁴ The physical technology is capable of handling some sixty languages “no problem” (F12) but “thirty is a reasonable limit” on the human side (OM57). There were sixty-two languages recognized as “official” in the European Union (OM57) in 2009.

under particular conditions of cost-bearing, and languages of guests, e.g., Arabic, Kurdish).⁴⁵

As the host of the largest interpreting community in the world, the EP is an ideal site for studying simultaneous interpretation.⁴⁶ The relevance is both contemporary and historical: namely, the European Parliament is attempting to govern with linguistic diversity instead of by language homogenization, and the EP is the direct heir of the first system of simultaneous interpretation created and performed during the World War II War Crimes Tribunal at Nuremberg. Interpreting for the European Parliament is prestigious: a pinnacle of professional achievement.⁴⁷

The linguistic rights of Members of the EP (formerly called Delegates) extend from the European Union's earliest inception as the Coal and Steel Consortium in 1958. Regulation No. 1 "determining the languages to be used by the European Economic Community" was understood as a practical matter of equality and instituted as the first

⁴⁵ At the time of fieldwork (2008-2009), the EU was negotiating with Turkey, and Kurdish was not supposed to be spoken in the EP. However interpreters were observed to do so and some admitted (off the record) that they felt it was a matter of 'the right thing to do' in the presence of Kurds who were speaking Kurdish, and who preferred (and in a few cases required) interpretations into Kurdish in order to fully comprehend and participate in the proceedings.

⁴⁶ The EP is an "ideological site....a notion developed by Silverstein (1998:136) 'as institutional sites of social practice as both object and modality of ideological expression.' Sites may be institutionalized, interactional rituals that are culturally familiar loci for the expression and/or explication of ideologies that indexically ground them in identities and relationships" (Kroskrity, 2000, p. 19).

⁴⁷ Simultaneous interpreters for the other European Institutions jostle for prominence too; the relevant distinction singling out the EP is the size of its official language footprint and its institutional ambition to be the representative voice for all of Europe's citizens (and, it could be argued, non-residents too). The other major institutions of the EU have reduced language regimes similar in size and scope to the United Nations.

rule in the original governing document (EUR-Lex). As EU expansion has continued over the years, the original linguistic right of choice has been extended to new Members despite concerns about the size, cost, and complication of the system required to enable functional interpretation across all language combinations. The official language regime at the EP during the course of the research reported here (2005 and 2008-2009) included twenty-three spoken languages (Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish, and Swedish), although Maltese was only provided during one observation. When fully functioning, simultaneous interpretation could occur in 506 binary combinations (e.g., English-Lithuanian, Czech-Spanish, French-Swedish, Polish-Finnish, etcetera). In the subsequent term (2009-2014), a Deaf Member of Parliament was elected from Hungary, which required incorporating Hungarian sign language interpreters as a regular part of the language regime.⁴⁸

The European Parliament is a dynamic microcosm of the European Union and thus serves both symbolic and practical purposes in regard to communicating the rituals of identification beyond the nation to Europe-as-a-whole. According to Raunio (1996) “the most under-studied features...are its internal organization and the behavior of individual MEPs...” (p. 40). His study on political party behavior during “Question

⁴⁸ Ádám Kósa works with seven sign language interpreters (EP Newshound, 2013).

Time” does not address the dynamics of simultaneous interpretation.⁴⁹ Is it just a curiosity that “the right of an elected Member to speak, read and write in his or her language” (a 2001 Bureau report quoted in Corbett *et al*, 2007, p. 38) omits “listening”? How beats this “heart of Parliament’s democratic legitimacy” (Patrick Twidle, in Lauridsen, 2002)?⁵⁰ Questions such as these highlight the community building function of SI in the EP by suggesting that skillful and strategic participation in simultaneous interpretation is at least as crucial as the transfer of information among speakers of various languages. If the goal of the EU is truly not to impose a common language on all of its citizens, but rather to maintain a plurilingual social structure in which knowing multiple languages is a core element of the European identity, then the skills of communicating across language difference through participating in the intercultural communication practice of simultaneous interpretation are as integral as the skills of communicating within language similarity through language learning.

⁴⁹ Raunio (1996) found, for instance, that “Party groups’ questioning activity is not related to their size and influence” (p. 224); and MEPs “make active use of questions in order to raise matters important to their constituents” (p. 225). He concludes: “Parliamentary questions have a well-established and important part to play in inter-institutional relations, especially between the Commission and the Parliament” (p. 226). Raunio’s study was specific to the Strasbourg Parliament; it is probably fair to generalize his results as representative of behavior in the Brussels Parliament too.

⁵⁰ “Multilingualism” is touted as the heart of the European Parliament’s democratic legitimacy in innumerable EU and EP public relations documents and occurs frequently in the talk of elected Members and permanent staff of the EP. Multilingualism is the official language ideology of the EU; its primary strategy is language learning. Bauman & Briggs (2000) present a critique of Locke and Herder that illuminates a trajectory of philosophical thought about language that is recognizable in EU language policy overall, as well as its instantiation in practice at the EP. More on language ideology in chapter seven.

1.6 Research Question

This study aims to reduce ambiguities about control and meaning during interpreted communication generally, that is, in as broad a manner as possible. This motivation complicates the matter of delineating a singular research question. Instead, the study revolves dynamically around four points of reference: consciousness, control, culture (through reference group comparisons) and voice. These reference points were selected in order to illustrate an outline for articulating theory about the social construction of timespace. The practical aim is to circulate language among practitioners and users of interpreting that calibrates (Holquist, 2009) to an alternative chronotope than the dominant postmodern condition of timespace compression (as described by Harvey, 1990). The method of action research was chosen specifically to promote interpretive flexibility and enable the researcher to root in reflective action learning.

1.6.1 Commitments: Action Learning

The reporting trajectory persists with the ethos of action learning. “If it is to be creative at all, research cannot be *confined* to the testing of predetermined hypotheses. New concepts and hypotheses emerge in the process of inquiry, and these become the basis for further inquiry. This, we take it, is exactly how continuity in science occurs” (Merton & Rossi, 1957, p. 249). I have in mind an intuition about systems change using simultaneous interpretation as an institutional lever for creating a field of equality as conceptualized by Amartya Sen (1992). Articulating a rationale for economic and social policies that support and encourage the use of simultaneous interpretation requires reflective analysis of existing conditions. Grounding rational recommendations in widely-shared experiences necessitates bridging participant experience with academic theorizing. I am

particularly interested in how people in policy-making positions understand their own language-related choices and concomitant communication interactions, and the extent to which they consider, or fail to consider, the full range of communicative implications.

Studying the attitudes and tensions emerging from talk about language use, language choice, and communicative efficiency with diverse users of two sophisticated systems for simultaneous interpretation addresses a gap in research regarding the perspectives of users of simultaneous interpretation. Considering interpreters and users⁵¹ together as whole units of social interaction that can be considered through lenses of group and organizational studies is rare. Imagining the communication among all of these participants in simultaneously-interpreted interaction as a form of culture is also unusual. Conceptualizing the attitudes and behavioral practices of co-participants in simultaneous interpretation as sites for cultural production is presented as a hypothesis for readers to explore and experiment with in terms of cultivating agency and establishing better conditions for the exercise of voice for all participants (interpretees and interpreters) in the special intercultural communication practices of simultaneous interpretation.

1.7 Organization of Chapters

Crafting the argument that simultaneous interpretation brings the social construction of timespace into view led naturally to considering the temporal framing of

⁵¹ To reiterate, users (also referred to as consumers and clients) have traditionally been identified interlocutors. Instead, I follow the lead of Graham H. Turner in referring to the users of SI as *interpretees* (2007). Distinguishing the basic roles in interpreted interaction as *interpretees* and *interpreters* emphasizes the co-participatory nature of communication. Also, problematizing assumptions of interpreter neutrality, the objectification of interpreters as machines, and the reduction of language to simplistic units of unambiguous meaning are served by this terministic switch.

this dissertation. Rather than a strictly linear process, the chapters cycle through emergent reference points, adding depth and detail. The next chapter describes the method of research, further establishing the juxtaposition and narrative strategies of action learning. Chapter three situates a recent timesnap of literature from Interpreting Studies (all fifteen contributions in one volume of conference proceedings published in 2009) in contrast with a longer trend of development in Translation Studies. Chapter four introduces the case study of the European Parliament as a democratic institution within the larger project of the European Union. The social reconstruction of conference interpreting by users of the system of SI in the EP is explored and a particular context of legislative work regarding asylum seekers is established.

The fifth chapter extends the exploration of discourse about interpreting in the European Parliament, investigating the possibility of a paradigm shift from multilingualism to plurilingualism and introducing the concepts of homolingualism and social interpreting. Chapter six revisits the establishment of technological and social norms for simultaneous interpretation and explores community interpreting for the Deaf as the natural point of comparison and contrast with conference interpreting. The sixth chapter includes an argument that community interpreting is an invention of Deaf culture. Finally, chapter seven touches upon some philosophy of the (so-called) language problem and tracks a few contemporary chronotopic calibrations with the goal of considering their forward influence on policy, practices, and legislation regarding SI while also engaging questions and implications of language ideology.

The design of these chapters is to cultivate thinking both backwards and forwards in time. Beginning with a current enactment of the intercultural communication practice

of conference-style simultaneous interpretation (SI) and comparing it with preceeding and concurrent developments in community-style SI, then casting further back in history, the narrative seeks to expand discursive consciousness.

Keeping in mind “the multiplex indexicalities of languages” (Kroskrity, 2000, p. 27), this research is premised in the “correlational relationship between high levels of discursive consciousness and active contestation of ideologies (p. 19). It’s imagined audience includes interpretees and policymakers as well as academics and practitioners. Structuring society to better accommodate language difference is, by definition, a challenge of thinking in terms of time. Achieving a political economic infrastructure that celebrates and protects differences would be evolutionary. Learning how to collaborate in the social co-construction of meanings and relationships through proactive participation in the special intercultural communication practice of simultaneous interpretation is proposed as a design stream for establishing a field of linguistic equality where the achievement of voice is a realistic possibility for all participants in interpreted communication.

CHAPTER 2

“METHOD”: NARRATIVE AND TRANSDISCIPLINARY JUXTAPOSITION

2.1 Overview

The ambition of this dissertation is to tell a story that inspires change. The goal is to “make a gathering that renders clear what is obscure” (Tedlock, 1983, p. 252) and which consistently “sticks to its object” (Henri Bergson, in Moore, 1996, p. xvii). Juxtaposing the comparison groups of community and conference interpreters and their respective interpretees within a unified historical narrative is the strategy.⁵² The audacity of a researcher’s “integral involvement...in an intent to change the organization[s]” is a characteristic of action research highlighted by organization scholars Eden & Huxham (1996, p. 539). “This intent may not succeed,” they clarify, “no change may take place as a result of the intervention – and the change may not be as intended” (p. 539).

Within such a frame, action learning is a humbler stance that aims to contribute to the knowledge of actors both within and beyond the research context, ideally resulting in “double loop learning” (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Double loop learning involves engaging research participants in critical reflection regarding “how the very way they go about defining and solving problems can be a source of problems in its own right” (Argyris,

⁵² Mona Baker argues that “narrative provides a basis for shared language and values, thus enabling the mobilization of numerous individuals with very different backgrounds and attributes around specific political, humanitarian, or social issues” (2010, p. 23).

1991, p. 2).⁵³ Action research is a qualitative method that became popular in management and organization studies during the 1970s and 1980s. The sub-style of action learning was selected for this dissertation research because it allowed the greatest range of motion for exploring the relationships among ‘objects’ and ‘subjects’ in the research domain while foregrounding the researcher as a learner, too.

The concept and practice of action research is tightly tied with the study of group dynamics and processes of organizational and social change, stemming from post-WWII work by Kurt Lewin (1946; 1947). Lewin shifted the object of psychology from the level of a self-contained individual to the social level of individuals as members of groups, inventing the field of social psychology. Lewin (1936) was particularly interested in change processes, and created an equation of social action: that a person’s behavior (B) is a function (f) of that person (P) in their environment (E), $B = f(P, E)$. Mathematical analogies are popular in the field of communication and figure importantly in the origins and models of interpreting and the production of interpreters.

Action research “directly confronts the theory/practice relationship” (Clegg et al, 1996, p. 13). Action research is a methodology “concerned with a system of *emergent theory*” (Eden & Huxham, 1996, p. 533, also Herr & Anderson, 2005). Such theory is necessarily interpretivist and subjective, considering multiple simultaneously-occurring

⁵³ Double-loop learning is contrasted with single-loop learning. Chris Argyris explains: “I have coined the terms “single loop” and “double loop” learning to capture this crucial distinction. To give a simple analogy: a thermostat that automatically turns on the heat whenever the temperature in a room drops below 68 degrees is a good example of single-loop learning. A thermostat that could ask, “Why am I set at 68 degrees?” and then explore whether or not some other temperature might more economically achieve the goal of heating the room would be engaging in double-loop learning.” (1991, p. xx).

complex transactions: *intrapersonal and intragroup* (within persons and their own language use), multiple *interpersonal and intergroup* dynamics (between interpretees and interpreters, among interpretees with and without interpreters, among interpreters with and without interpretees), *intra-institutionally* (among MEPs, EP interpreters, and Parliament's staff), and *inter-institutionally* (taking the European Parliament as an organizational locus of policy making for society). All of these layers confirm Eden and Huxham's (1996) recommendation that action research be geared toward theory generation and development, rather than (for instance) trying to test the results of a single, particularized hypothesis.

Eden and Huxham particularly emphasize the necessity of producing results that can be generalized from the specific case to wider applications in other contexts. Also, "history and context...must be taken as critical" (1996, p. 539). They assert that the best action research is importantly concerned with systematic relationships, because "the aim is to understand conceptual and theoretical *frameworks* where each theory must be understood in the context of other related theories" (p. 532). Most of the emphasis here is to document the discourse about simultaneous interpretation, with references to other literature provided as markers of theory informing and grounding the analysis. Contrary to the academic preference for paraphrasing, most citations are quoted in order to emphasize discursive relations in addition to intellectual and epistemological connections.

Ethnographic documentation is obviously a necessity in order to track "theory [that] develops from a synthesis of that which emerges from the data and that which emerges from the use in practice of the body of theory" (Eden and Huxham, 2002, p. 533). Hence lengthy quotations from research participants, representative as well as

demonstrative of the iterative (Herr & Anderson, 2005), looping (Greenwood, 1997), and cyclic (Heron, 1996; Lather, 1986) nature of dialogically developing understanding among researcher, participants and relevant literature (Herr & Anderson, 2005). All quotations taken together should illustrate the application of interpreting (as theory) as it develops into prescriptions for interpreting (as practice). Action research assumes there will be “implications beyond...the project...that could inform other contexts” (p. 539), which must be “capable of being explained to others” (p. 539) and “disseminated in such a way as to be of interest to an audience wider than those integrally involved with the action and/or with the research” (p. 539).

2.2 Commitments: Interpreting as a Communication Event

An assumption that carries throughout this dissertation and its analyses is a disciplinary stance that views interpreting as a communication event, not as a linguistic event. Although language and linguistics are obviously involved in any and every instance of simultaneous interpretation, one of the action research hypotheses is that the linguistic frame is inadequate for addressing the complexity of intercultural social interaction, even when reduced to the realm of interpreted communication. A reference point for this action learning question is Claudia Angelelli’s (2000) application of Dell Hymes’ “taxonomy of speaking” (p. 580). Hymes’s (1962) SPEAKING⁵⁴ rubric is

⁵⁴ Dell Hymes (1962) created a rubric for remembering the components of communication events: S=Setting, Scene. P=Participants. E=Ends (intended, actual). A=Act (the speech act). K=Key (generally, tone). I=Instrument or channel of communication. N=Norms. G=Genre. This dissertation investigates norms and ends (both actual and intended). Kroskrity notes that “Hymes (1974:33) called for the inclusion of a community’s local theory of speech, even if only as ethnography” (2000, p. 6).

foundational to a robust area of research called the ethnography of communication.

Angelelli explains:

[Hymes] defines a speech community as ‘a social, rather than a linguistic entity’ (1074: 47) thus differentiating it from language. This distinction separates Hymes’ work from Bloomfield’s or Chomsky’s since the later [sic] have equated speech community to language. (Angelelli, 2000, p. 584)

Using Hymes’ categories in an abstract, comparative analysis, Angelelli concludes “there are more differences than similarities between the two settings” of conference and community interpreting (p. 580).⁵⁵

Angelelli (2000) couches her argument in a disagreement with Roberts (1998) about whether interpreting in these two settings are “equal on the types of skills they required from interpreters and on the ethical principles they observed” (p. 581). Angelelli is working within an equivalence paradigm⁵⁶ in which “the goal of translation or interpretation (T&I) is that a message makes the same impact on the target audience that a speaker/signer intends for an audience of her/his same language” (p. 580). An important caveat (offered in parentheses) is Angelelli’s idealization of equality *sans* the role of

⁵⁵ Interestingly, rather than establishing a single variable, Angelelli sets up a contrast between “conference interpreting in a *simultaneous* mode (done in a booth) with community interpreting in *consecutive* mode” (emphasis added, 2000, p. 582). She says this “rationale...is what emerges from the literature...and from the average situations observed” (p. 582). Her study is interview based, presumably only with spoken language interpreters. This deduction appears to be born out in her table’s section on *Channels* in which she specifies “the medium of speech transmission (e.g. oral, written, telegraphic, etc.)” (p. 588) without acknowledgment of signed languages. The gathering of simultaneous sign language interpreters with simultaneous spoken language interpreters *together* within the mode of simultaneous (not consecutive) interpreting is unique to this action learning research endeavour.

⁵⁶ See section 2.4, Tangling with Translation Studies, for more on the equivalence paradigm.

privilege. She seeks to argue that it is possible to “[show] that different interpretation situations are different in substantive ways (without falling into the prestige trap)” (p. 582) and to “explore interpretation events where the standards of conference interpreting (regardless of prestige) may prove insufficient to gain an understanding of the complexity involved in community interpreting” (p. 582).

The prestige Angelelli is referring to regards the basis of Roberts (1998) argument, which, Angelelli reports “was based on the similarities of community and conference interpreting in order for the former to achieve the same status and prestige that the later [sic] enjoys” (p. 581). My position is that community interpreters should have the same status as conference interpreters, although the status question is not a sufficient motivator in and of itself. The disagreement with Angelelli is twofold: first, prestige (power, privilege) can never be ruled out (Foucault, 1980);⁵⁷ and second, with her conclusion that “a single standard of interpretation ... [is] inappropriate since different communicative events require different performances on the part of the interpreter” (p. 582). Taking a stance in action research and action learning allows attention to shift among the elements and assumptions embedded in Angelelli’s claim: including, for instance, the relevance of performance differences depending upon which single standard is applied, and the exclusive focus on the interpreter’s performance with no responsibility or accountability afforded to interpretees.

⁵⁷ “Michel Foucault offered a slightly more optimistic view of the relationship between language and power...for Foucault, discourse is ambiguous and plurivocal. It is a site of conflict and contestation. Thus, women [for instance] can adopt and adapt language to their own ends. They may not have total control over it but then neither do men. Choice, chance and power govern our relationships to the discourses we employ” (Sawicki, 1991, p. 1).

Also, referring to “one of the main pillars and classics since they were the first to write on interpretation and interpretation pedagogy,” Angelelli borrows the definition provided by Seleskovitch and Lederer (1989): “Interpretation is the transfer of a message across languages” (Angelelli, 2000, p. 581). This transfer model (a transmission model) is a central theme in the discourses about interpreting presented here. The prevalence and function of a transmission model in determining the social organization and norms of interpreted events will be critiqued, particularly as a feature of linguistic inequality.

Finally, in keeping with a kinship model (e.g., Pochhacker, 2007), Angelelli poses conference and community interpreting as “two points on an interpretation continuum, rather than a dichotomy” (2000, p. 582). She lays out her basic assumptions regarding each: “We may assume that a community interpreter is probably quite familiar with the *ways of speaking* that occur in her/his community. Undoubtedly, this means that she/he is a *fluent speaker* of that *speech community*” (emphasis in original, p. 585). “A conference interpreter has to be familiar with the *ways of speaking* that occur in a conference. However, this does not necessarily mean that he/she must be a *fluent speaker* of that *speech community* (of which the speaker and the audience are genuine members who do not share a common language)” (emphasis in original, p. 585).

As the rest of the dissertation will demonstrate, some of Angelelli’s (2000) conclusions are problematized with a more proactive inclusion of sign language and the community interpreting norm of simultaneous signed-spoken language interpretation rather than consecutive (as is often necessitated by working in the same oral/auditory medium). For instance, she characterizes the Hymesian *Scene* of community interpreting involving the interpretees’ having “constant interaction with both speaker and listener

allow[ing] for negotiation and clarification” (p. 589) and the interpreter as a *Participant* “facing a dialogic situation (of which she is an active participant too), [in which] she has the opportunity to interact differently if she needed to negotiate meaning (ask for elaboration, clarification, etc.)” (p. 590). Angelelli’s findings from spoken language community interpreting are not necessarily in accord with signed-spoken language community interpreting. Some reasons for the differences involve power and institutionalized practices of professional simultaneous interpretation.

2.3 Paradigms: Two Approaches to Language & Communication

As hinted at above, the functional linguistic paradigm privileges the source language as primary in interpreted communication. This privileging is structured through emphasizing the text (the words) rather than the speech act (the interpretee’s voice in the interaction). The structuralism of focusing on linguistic functions remains the dominant and unchallenged way of thinking about interpreting. An interpretivist or interactional paradigm has made some inroads into Interpreting Studies, for instance in the guise of ‘dialogic discourse-based interaction’ (Pöchhacker 2004, p. 79), but the lessons of the interpretive paradigm are continuously subsumed by the perpetuation of positivist structural framings. The synonym of ‘positivist’ for both ‘functionalist’ and ‘structuralist’ is because the functions being structured are maintained and reinforced: an additive ‘positive’ effect. Although a literal equation is far too crass, for the purposes of introducing the argument I will borrow a generalization between structuralism and a building-block approach to language, and another generalization between interpretivism and a creative approach to language.

Barnett Pearce (1994), in the tradition of American pragmatism, poses the opposition between static building-blocks and a perpetual creativity in language use in order to establish two basic orientations to “language as such” (Benjamin, 1916/1969).⁵⁸ As with any duality, the opposition can be exaggerated too extremely, and each orientation can be applied to the same stimulus or object of study. The point in using this opposition as a heuristic is not to argue that one is more right than the other, only that both exist, and each entails different possibilities. The building-block and the creative orientations to language both focus on language, but the building-block approach looks at the words *as if* disembodied from the speaker/signer, and the interpretivist approach never neglects the context that the speaking/signing body is situated within.

In *How To Do Things With Words*, J.L Austin showed that some speech acts “make things happen” (1962/1992). The classic examples involve ministers who pronounce marriage and judges who sentence criminals. If someone not authorized to utter those words says them, neither married life nor jail time are forthcoming. The action of these statements made by non-authorized persons is, then, that of lying or make-believe. Any saying and every utterance always does something, it is the meaning or effect that differs depending upon who says it and how it is received, which can be separated (as in structural linguistics) as if these are independent variables, or taken together as intradependent variables of social interaction.

This power of language to do things, of language as an activity, is also illustrated by Ludwig Wittgenstein’s (1953) theory of ‘speech playing’ or language games (Pearce,

⁵⁸ “Benjamin himself believed that “all human knowledge, if it can be justified, must take on no other form than that of interpretation” (Kirsch, 2006).

p. 110). The difference between Austin and Wittgenstein is that in Austin's speech act theory the component parts of language are discrete and have fixed meanings; language is composed of building-blocks to be put together in certain ways to conduct specific behaviors and accomplish desired actions. The range of meaning for "I pronounce you man and wife" in the building-block conception is fairly narrow, because the phrase is intended only to be uttered under appropriate circumstances. Whereas for Wittgenstein, language is always understood first as uttered in a context, from which it follows that the meaning(s) of a speech act are always flexible: "the meaning of what we say is determined by how it fits into the game" (Pearce, p. 110). From the creative perspective, "I pronounce you man and wife" could be a joke, a theatrical performance, or a scathing social commentary; each of which would do different work, socially.

Critical discourse analysis provides evidence that discourses about community-style SI tend to reflect the building-block orientation to language. The building-block assumption concerning language carries across settings of conference and community interpreting, research and practice, interpretees and interpreters. The building-block view is a natural fit with the structuralism of functional linguistics. To give one quick example from the volume of community interpreting studies research that will compose the literature review in chapter three, Tebble (2009) provides a diagram, a "Hierarchy of discourse structures" (Figure 4, p. 210), which she describes as "a ranked scale from the smallest unit, the speech act, to the largest discourse unit, the genre itself" (p. 209). The metacommunication implicit in this "language about language" (p. 210) is of discrete,

unconnected units (uttered speech acts) serving explicit functions as if they only ‘build up’ in an additive way to generate a top level of a discourse hierarchy.⁵⁹

In keeping with the paradigm, Tebble (2009) uses the label, genre, for the top level. In contrast, interpretivist theories start with a multilayered view of language and social interaction and work ‘up,’ ‘down’ and ‘through’ discourse toward both genres and acts. Imagine the center and periphery of a sphere, with ‘action’ moving in both directions, originating (and re-originating) from both the center and the periphery in multiple flows of circulation. The difference is that an interpretivist view can allow the act to change the genre, a possibility not available within structuralist regimes that establish the genre as determinant. The analysis up to this point makes the case that structuralism (specifically the functional linguistic paradigm) retains too much sway in the practice of simultaneous interpretation. This is particularly evidenced in the community interpreting literature by the frustration of interpreters with interpretees and in tensions within the academic meta-discourse of interpreting researchers.

⁵⁹ Vuorikoski’s view is more nuanced. “Genres are the result of socio-discursive practices acquired by text producers” (2004, p. 66). She draws upon Jean-Michel Adam (1999) who has combined discourse analysis with a non-English-centered text linguistics. Vuorikoski uses terminology developed by Halliday (1985/1990) but does not rely upon him solely because “his work is based on the English language” (p. 66). “Adam quotes Bakhtin and his definition of the functions of genres. Bakhtin proposes that for the reciprocal intelligibility of language, the genres of discourse are just as important as the grammatical forms of language. Compared with the grammatical forms, the discourse genres are more changeable and more flexible while still possessing a normative value for the individual speaker; the speaker has not created them himself, they have been given to him. (Bakhtin 1984: 287, quoted by Adam 1999: 90)” (in Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 67). Tebble refers (functionally) to the normative value of a genre; which I’m seeking to balance with attention to their changeability and flexibility.

The goal of this dissertation is to expose and engage these paradigmatic tensions with consideration of the implications for material practice. Bringing the language of the interpretive paradigm into critical interaction with the language of the structural paradigm is an experiment. This experimental essence dictated the selection of action research as the most appropriate methodology. Critical discourse analysis is one of the main tools used in service of the action research. Technically, it could be considered an experiment in foreignization. This term will be properly defined in the forthcoming section on translation studies, after the following section on methodology.

2.3.1 Action research: Application in the Interpretivist Paradigm

The combination of research tools includes critical discourse analysis (e.g., Fairclough, 1992, Blommaert, 2004) and Dell Hymes (1962, 1972, 1974) SPEAKING rubric from the ethnography of communication (e.g., Angelelli, 2000; Carbaugh, 1990). Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional theory of critical discourse analysis is an application of an interpretivist orientation to language in a style that might be characterized by the later Wittgenstein (1953) who, for instance, poses 'family resemblances' as a way to think about the meanings of words based on the web of their relationships with other similar and related words. For Fairclough (1992), every utterance is simultaneously an act, an instance of discursive practice, and an instance of social practice. The words of an utterance are given meaning by the relations among definitions held by interlocutors according to individual discernment as to which of the simultaneously-occurring levels (discourse, social interaction, speech act) is significant or necessary within the given context at each turn in the communication process.

Creativity enters based upon interpreter choice (whether this is consciously prioritized or habitually conditioned) regarding which level(s) of an utterance to respond to: the discrete act (conceived as a turn in a ritual flow of interaction), the discourse instantiated by the act (e.g., a particular ideology or a social construction of identity), or the enactment of social practice (e.g., empowerment or disenfranchisement). As useful and productive as structuralism is for understanding useful and important things about communication, linguistic functionalism cannot accommodate the variability of these simultaneously-occurring levels of communication because linguistic functionalism focuses 'positively' and exclusively on the speech act, rendering the other levels of meaning essentially invisible.

So, while it may seem that the difference between structuralism and interpretivism is only the matter of direction, as in the opposition between induction and deduction, either building up or inferring down, the crucial distinction regards what is excluded or included in the analysis. For instance, drawing upon my own and other working interpreters' experiences, we often recognize speech acts representing different social practices or distinctive discursive practices in one language that are appropriate for the context but unfamiliar to interpretees using another language. How can this be dealt with?

Structuralism will reduce these social and discursive practices to a single dimension by insisting the speech act represents a supposedly uncontroversial (one could say traditional or customary) speech act indicating a particular kind of turn given the script prescribed by genre. Interpretivism will assume as a matter of course that speech acts always carry potentials for new social relationships and discursive alternatives to genre norms that could be made meaningful by interpretees at any moment during the

event. A creative orientation to language and language use presumes a wider degree of flexibility in the realm of meaning-making than the structuralist building-block approach usually allows. This is not because the building-block view prohibits or denies the emergence of spontaneity or discovery; rather the structuralist view conditions its adherents to ‘positively’ seek the expected and familiar instead of cultivating alertness for the significance of the unusual, unordinary, or atypical.

Heuristically-coupling these two approaches to language, building-block and creative, with the respective paradigms of structuralism and interpretivism, enables a demonstration of how they work as language ideologies while demonstrating that they can also work well together, hand-in-hand.⁶⁰ This is one of the action research goals of exploring the difference between Giddens’ (1979, 1984) practical consciousness and discursive consciousness in interpreter and interpretee accounts and representations of simultaneous interpretation. What do interpretees and interpreters *know how to do* in

⁶⁰ Kroskrity (2000) “introduce(s) the notion of language ideology...[by] offer[ing] a language-ideological myth of origin. In such a myth, the concept of language ideology is the offspring of a union of two neglected forces: the linguistic ‘awareness’ of speakers and the (nonreferential) functions of language. Both of these forces were prematurely marginalized by the dominant and disciplinarily institutionalized approaches to language, which denied the relevance—to linguistics, certainly—of a speaker’s own linguistic analysis and valorized the referential functions of language to the exclusion of others. In effect, this surgical removal of language from context produced an ‘amputated’ language that was the preferred object of the language sciences for most of the twentieth century.

Two of the many proposed definitions of language ideology emphatically restore the relevance of these contextual factors...Michael Silverstein (1979:193) defined linguistic ideologies as ‘sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use.’ In a similar way, but with a more sociocultural emphasis, Judith Irvine (1989:255) defined language ideology as ‘the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests.’ Both definitions place a focal emphasis on speakers’ ideas about language and discourse and about how these articulate with various social phenomena” (p. 5).

practical terms, and what are interpretees and interpreters *able to say* about what it is that they are doing during simultaneous interpretation? Giddens' (1984) distinction is one of reflexivity:

The reflexive capacities of the human actor are characteristically involved in a continuous manner with the flow of day-to-day conduct in the contexts of social activity. But reflexivity operates only partly on a discursive level. What agents know about what they do, and why they do it—their knowledgeability as agents—is largely carried in practical consciousness. Practical consciousness consists of all the things which actors know tacitly about how to 'go on' in the contexts of social life without being able to give them direct discursive expression. (Thursby, n.d., Paragraph 10)

In the next chapter, we'll see in the literature, there is not much evidence of discursive consciousness of researchers about the social and epistemic practice of constructing paradigmatic knowledge. This is not because interpreting researchers lack discursive consciousness. It is a side effect of operating, practically, in only one paradigm: structural, positivist linguistic functionalism.

Reading a critical discourse analysis of previously taken-for-granted knowledge may be confusing or even alienating. If so, these are among the possible effects of foreignization, an important concept from the field of translation studies from Lawrence Venuti (1998). Comparing the professional discourses between interpreting researchers and translation researchers highlights similarities and differences in the practical and discursive consciousness of researchers in these fields. More on Venuti's relevance to this study will be presented below.

2.4 Contrast: Tangling with Translation Theory

To pursue development of discursive consciousness about paradigmatic tensions in interpreting research, some comparison will be made between the academic fields of interpreting and translation studies. Basil Hatim's (2001) *Teaching and Researching Translation* and Edwin Gentzler's (2001) *Contemporary Translation Theories* establish bases for the advancing evolution of thought in terms of literary translation theory. More current thinking is quite radical. In *Translation, Resistance, Activism* (2010), editor Maria Tymoczko has composed a collection of chapters exploring "how we have arrived at a position where translations are read and discussed as records of cultural contestations and struggle rather than as simple literary transpositions or creative literary endeavours" (p. 3).

For instance, Mona Baker (2010) presents "some of the ways in which translation and interpreting may...challenge the dominant narratives of time" (p. 23). An example is provided by Antonia Carcelen-Estrada (2010), who sets two antagonists

in dialogue, hypothesizing that the [Huaorani, an indigenous people in the Ecuadorian Amazon whose language is Huao Terero] translated their bodies as the [Summer Institute of Linguistics] translated the Bible, with consequent divergence between actions and intentions in both systems. The temporal, semiotic, and intentional miscommunication between these two groups unveils different levels of ideology and significant ethical problems. (p. 65-66)

Where Carcelen-Estrada finds evidence of "a native strategy for cultural survival" (p. 66) from inside the translation process, Pua'ala'okalani D. Aiu (2010) describes how and why "Hawaiians often choose not to translate because refusal to translate allows Hawaiian speakers to keep the context of their language intact" (p. 104). This contributes to the irony that "both translation and non-translation work to empower Hawaiians (p.

105) who promote “Ne’e papa i ke ʻō mau,” that is, “the inevitable return tide of the Hawaiian language and with it Hawaiian cultural values and practices” (p. 89).

Tymoczko locates “the metonymic nature of both translation and activism” (2010, p. 250) in the “specificity...of engaged translation” (p. 251) wherein “activist strategies are highly variable and...sensitive to context, minutely located in time and space” (2010, p. 249). Importantly, in order to be successful, an “activist translation must fit the felicity conditions of its time” (p. 251).⁶¹ Within this dissertation, the notion of interpretation as activism and resistance are mainly held in the wings and backstage. Instead, the narrative foregrounds existing tensions and problems in keeping with Fairclough’s (1989) “faith in the capacity of human beings to change what human beings have created...[through] people developing a critical consciousness of domination and its modalities, rather than just experiencing them” (in Tymoczko, 2010, p. 227).

2.4.1 A Dash through Key Developments in Translation Studies

Writing in 2001, Gentzler explains:

In the early days of translation theory, multiple theories simply did not exist. The goal at the time, and which, despite the prevailing evidence, continues to be the goal of some scholars today, was to establish one general theory of translation that would hold across cultures and languages. (p. xii)

⁶¹ The coordination of actors in timespace, in combination with external conditions, generates time felicity.

The ‘early days’ in Gentzler’s (2001) account are the 1980s.⁶² Gentzler establishes the formal origins of translation in the 1960s with the advent of academic programs involving translation; these came to be known as the North American translation workshop. Paul Engle instituted a Creative Writing Program at the University of Iowa, hosting the first translation workshop in 1964; a Ford Foundation grant established the National Translation Center at the University of Texas Austin in 1965; and two publications were being produced by 1968 (*Modern Poetry in Translation* and *Delos*). Then there was a plateau during the 1970s about which Gentzler says, “One reason is surely the monolingual nature of the [US] culture” (p. 6).⁶³

⁶² Note: this is the time period when American Deaf resistance against institutionalized oralism (Ladd, 2003), audism (e.g., Padden & Humphries, 1988; Lane, 1992) and the colonization and co-optation of American Sign Language within the profession of sign language interpretation was gaining momentum.

⁶³ American monolingualism had particularly profound effects on deaf people. Historian R.A.R. Edwards (2012) traces how American nationalism was imprinted on the deaf body, whose cultural identity was formed in conjunction with the establishment of residential schools for the deaf in the mid-nineteenth century. As sign language began to emerge as the natural language of the deaf, and deaf people began to associate with each other, observers noticed the spontaneous development of behavioral norms and attitudes associated with a unique culture. This was welcomed by early manualists such as French sign language teacher Laurent Clerc and American businessman Thomas Gallaudet, who had “an understanding of disability that was located more in the society than in the body. The deaf body may not hear, but it need not be made over to approximate hearing norms. Rather, social norms may be adjusted to accommodate the deaf body” (p. 157). This was “a vision that the oralists, led by [Samuel Gridley] Howe and [Horace] Mann, would not accept. ... The most that could be done would be to mask this inferiority by making it possible for the deaf to pass as hearing and so to reify the norm of the able-bodied. The way for a society to deal with disability, in this oralist vision, was to make it invisible. This erasure of the disabled from public view, in order to preserve the body politic as uniformly able-bodied accounts for the impulse to train the deaf to pass as hearing” (p. 158).

Previously, linguists had begun to address some concerns of translation earlier: Jakobson distinguished among *intralingual*, *interlingual*, and *intersemiotic* translation in 1959,⁶⁴ and Quine discussed problems with determining meaning in 1960. “The problems,” writes Gentzler, “of referentiality and indeterminacy have historically troubled translation theory, making positions calling for a one-to-one transfer approach and methods revolving around a decoding and recoding process increasingly difficult to hold” (2001, p. 12-13). That ‘transfer approach’ remains dominant in discourses in simultaneous interpretation, which has not yet moved beyond what Hatim calls “the equivalence paradigm” (2001, p. 12).

In other words, translation studies has been addressing “the epistemological problem” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 35) for all of the decades that sign language interpreting has been in existence and most of the decades since spoken language simultaneous

⁶⁴ Roman Jakobson’s (1959) work is in structural linguistics. His three types of translation are not addressed but remain, foundationally, in the background. Kroskrity (2000) establishes Jakobson as part of the lineage building up to the concept of language ideology: “Semiotic models of communication were formulated by Jakobson (1957, 1960) and then in a functional idiom by Hymes (1964). Based on the theories of C.S. Peirce (1931-1958), they recognized a variety of sign-focused ‘pragmatic’ relations between language users, the sign vehicles of their languages, and the connections between these signs and the world. By contrast, most models—whether the ethnoscience models of cultural anthropologists or the formal models of Chomskian linguistics—reduced linguistic meaning to denotation, or ‘reference,’ and predication. One of the key advantages of such semiotic-functional models is the recognition that much of the meaning and hence communicative value that linguistic forms have for their speakers lies in the ‘indexical’ connections between the linguistic signs and the contextual factors of their use—their connection to speakers, settings, topics, institutions, and other aspects of their sociocultural worlds” (p. 7). The effectiveness of making such indexical connections is a key feature of achieving voice. Also, Gentzler argues, “the Jakobson term ‘creative transposition,’ with the emphasis on creative, seems more operative [as a definition for translation] (Jakobson, 1959: 238)” (2001, p. 35).

interpretation was invented at Nuremberg.⁶⁵ The epistemological problem is a label that refers to the conundrum of establishing a definitive foundation for a unifying theory of interpretation, that is, for a central organizing principle that eliminates the disagreements about whether the essence of communication (and thus of translation) lies in energy, identity, things, meanings, referents, sources, or time (Gentzler, p. 35).

Seemingly far removed yet in parallel with developments in translation theory, during the 1980s American Deaf communities were trying to reclaim community-based cultural performances of sign language interpreting from an influx of cultural outsiders, re-establish the education of deaf children in the visual medium best suited to their cognitive development, and counter the medicalization of deafness which justifies surgical interventions such as cochlear implants and intensive speech therapies. While the American Deaf community was fighting for their bodies on the ground, translation theorists were fighting against what Gentzler (2001) calls a theoretical “stranglehold” (p. xi). “In the late 1980s...the field [of literary translation] was trying to set itself free from the dominance of...source-text oriented theories” (p. x-xi).

2.4.2 The Cultural Turn

Gentzler (2001) outlines five strands of intellectual thinking that have influenced the field of translation studies: 1) new criticism aimed at a “proper”⁶⁶ translation of

⁶⁵ The “IBM System” of electronic technology that enabled the simultaneous interpretation of four languages during the Nuremberg Trials after WWII is discussed in chapter five.

⁶⁶ “Richards’s 1953 model was specifically tailored for the translator who aimed to arrive at the ‘proper’ translation” (2001, p. 14).

poetry in service of “perfect understanding”⁶⁷ (i.e., Richards, 1929, 1953); 2) an energy-based theory of language⁶⁸ as a vortex characterized by “luminous” details⁶⁹ and dynamism of meaning⁷⁰ (i.e., Ezra Pound);⁷¹ 3) translation as paradox⁷² and thrust⁷³ (i.e.,

⁶⁷ ““A perfect understanding would involve not only an accurate direction of thought, a correct evocation of feeling, an exact apprehension of tone and a precise recognition of intention, but further it would get these contributory meanings in their right order’ (Richards, 1929: 332)” in Gentzler (2001, p. 11).

⁶⁸ “[Pound’s] method was modern [not postmodern] insofar as it emphasized juxtaposition and combination, hoping that the new configurations would react chemically, combining into a new compound, and thereby give off energy” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 23).

⁶⁹ “Words, according to [Ezra] Pound, were always seen in a network of relations: Anglo-American words were signs similar to Chinese characters—always capable of being compounded and capable of being metamorphosized” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 18). “Theoretically for Pound, Chinese characters represented not meanings, not structures, but things, or more importantly, *things in action*, in process, things with energy, their form” (italics in original, Gentzler, 2001, p. 18).

⁷⁰ “[Pound] thinks not in terms of separable languages, but of a mesh or interweaving of words that bind people together regardless of nationalities. The threads of language run back in time, and as one traces them back, variable connections can be made...Pound’s ideas were not aimed at fixed things, but at things that can change” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 19).

⁷¹ “According to Pound’s translation theory, meaning is not something abstract and part of a universal language, but something that is always already located in historical flux—the ‘atmosphere’ in which that meaning occurs. To unpack that meaning, one has to know the history and reconstruct the atmosphere/milieu in which that meaning occurred” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 22).

⁷² The paradox is epistemological, “how is it possible to know anything we do not already know” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 27), which problematizes the idea of “a universal objective reality. Reality can only be learned, he argues, through the names we give it, and so, to a certain degree language is the creator of reality” (p. 24-25). “The activity of translation, according to Will, somehow reveals to the translator that language is simultaneously unstable and stable, that texts are interwoven in reality and in a tradition of fiction, and that man, as a complex system, is both subjected by language or systems of discourse and is capable of creating language or new relations in the present” (p. 30).

Frederick Will); 4) a digression into the creative *process* of translation, in which *ad hoc*, so-called ‘free’ or ‘modern’ translation “by writers with limited language skills ... allow[ing] translators without the facility in a given language to translate, using literal versions as cribs, from which they intuit the ‘essence’” emerges (Gentzler, p. 32), raising “a whole new set of questions” (p. 34); and finally, 5) the cultural studies’ contribution of Lawrence Venuti in “rethinking translation” through criticism (consonant with Gentzler’s own) of “the humanistic underpinnings...[which] reinforces prevailing domestic beliefs and ideologies” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 36).

Venuti’s main thesis is that translation tends to be an invisible practice in the United States. By invisible, he means that the translators tend to be self-effacing in their work, denying their own voice in favour of that of the author and / or the prevailing styles in the receiving culture, and that in translation criticism, scholars tend to ignore the decisions and mediations of the translators, commenting instead as if they have direct access to the author. Translations are judged to be successful when they read “fluently,” giving the appearance that they have not been translated” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 36)

Simultaneous interpreters may recognize this discourse of invisibility and flow.

Gentzler’s intellectual strands in the history of translation studies overlap and expand upon five types of equivalence described by Hatim (2001) on the basis of their

⁷³ “What Will advocates...is an approach that translates not what a work means, but the energy or ‘thrust’ of a work, for which there is no ‘correct’ way of translating. He writes: ‘Translation is *par excellence* the process by which the thrust behind the verbal works of man ... can be directly transferred, carried on, allowed to continue. ... Works of literature are highly organized instances of such thrust ... these blocks force themselves on, through time, from culture to culture (Will, 1973: 155).’ This ‘thrust’ is a new concept ... Translation is less seen as a ‘carrying over’ of content, but as a ‘carrying on’ of the content *in* language. In translation, texts are reborn, given new life, stimulated with new energy ... Meaning is redefined by Will not as something behind the words or text, not as an ‘essence’ in a traditional metaphysical sense, but as something different, as thrust or energy...a possible/impossible paradox of language which not only defines the translation process, but defines how we come to know ourselves through language” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 28-19).

academic discipline: formal equivalence from the field of linguistics (i.e., Catford); dynamic equivalence from the field of sociolinguistics (i.e., Nida); pragmatic equivalence from the field of structural linguistics (e.g., Koller); text-based equivalence from the field of poetics (Beaugrande), and foreignization and equivalence from the field of cultural studies (Venuti). What distinguishes Gentzler's organization from Hatim's is that Hatim appears to accept the assumptions of equivalence, while Gentzler highlights the fact that there is always a *non dit* - that is, in any translation there is always something left unsaid.

In other words, Gentzler's starting point is the impossibility of equivalence. "Translation theory is not easy," he explains. "Rather, it involves complex theories of meaning and complex social forces creating numerous barriers, in addition to the already prohibitive linguistic ones" (2001, p. xi-xii). Hatim is by no means arguing that translation is easy, however he provides a sense that it can be packaged within academic boundaries. Gentzler disagrees, highlighting the "interdisciplinary... incompatibilities... [which] show how such problems of communication and exchange are grounded in the differing theoretical assumptions of each approach" (p. 2). Gentzler also argues for the inherent value of translation studies, which has provided "a first look into the black box of the human mind as it works and reworks" the tasks of interpretation (p. 35).

Rather than a (structuralist) emphasis on equivalence, Gentzler describes creative discovery, how translation "simultaneously reinforces and subverts" (2001, p. 9) because "the very limits and constraints of the activity of translating seem to help in making possible new verbal constructions" (p. 36). This inherently creative play results in "the possibility of challenging norms and creating new forms of expression" (p. vii). Gentzler's analysis corresponds with and reflects the influence of Lawrence Venuti, who

calls the question on the equivalence paradigm (with its privileging of the source text and its emphasis on transfer) with his 1998 work, *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*.

2.4.3 Foreignization

What does it mean to foreignize? Venuti poses foreignization as a counterpoint not only to the idea of equivalence, but also to the values assigned to fluency. “Venuti sets up two paradigms for translation: one he calls fluent and the other foreignizing; one opts for acceptable uses of linguistic and cultural terms and images| and the other ab-uses or chooses alternatives” (Gentzler, 2001, p. 41-42). Venuti questions any representation, explanation or definition “that mystifies...[translation] as *an untroubled communicative act*” (emphasis added, 1998, p. 11).⁷⁴

While there are significant differences in the communication event of writing/reading a translated literary work and the communication event of participating in live simultaneous interpretation, the paradigm conflict between fluency and foreignization holds. The intercultural setting made manifest by the need for live interpretation highlights how fluency domesticates and assimilates what is foreign, alien, or just different even when there is only one language involved.

⁷⁴ Full context: “The very function of translating is assimilation, the inscription of a foreign text with domestic intelligibilities and interests. I follow Berman (1992:4-5; cf. his revision in 1995:93-94) in suspecting any literary translation that mystifies this inevitable domestication as an untroubled communicative act. Good translation is demystifying: it manifests in its own language the foreignness of the foreign text (Berman 1985:89)” (Venuti, 1998, p. 11).

As an example, Gentzler (2008) analyses an intralingual translation that illustrates how

a retelling of the same story in the same language is always going to be a different story... Translation enters the novel less by the juxtaposition of language and more by the juxtaposition of culture and sexuality. In this motel at the edge of the civilization, run by women and with many women guests, the only male figure in the book, "*L'homme long*" ("Longman/Oblong Man"), comes to represent the foreign. He is the outsider, his arrogance does not fit in, and his devices—the mathematical equations in his writings, the pornography that he reads in his room, the gun that he hides under a napkin—represent a threat to the community. One of the hardest parts in the translation is *not* to assimilate the foreign, and in this case the goal is not to assimilate the male figure, who also most of the time is polite and treats people with respect. While Maude Laures [the protagonist in the novel, a translator] is able to capture the chaos, ecstasy, energy, and sexuality radiated by [an antagonist] Angela Parkins, whether she captures the foreignness as she translates *L'homme long* into *l'homme'oblong* is debatable. (Gentzler, p. 63-64)⁷⁵

Gentzler is not claiming that *l'homme'oblong*'s difference is completely erased in the translation, but he seems to suspect that some of the aspects of culture, socialization, and personality that make *L'homme long* such a remarkable contrast and obvious outsider in the situation are muted, dulled, perhaps sacrificed in service of faithfulness, accuracy and similarity to the source text.⁷⁶

In other words, too much fluency can hide power. Venuti elaborates:

A translation always communicates an interpretation, a foreign text that is partial and altered, supplemented with features peculiar to the translating

⁷⁵ *Le désert mauve* by Nicole Brossard (1987).

⁷⁶ "Brossard's fiction," explains Gentzler, "for the first time to my knowledge, allows the reader to enter that cultural space of translators in their own unique element. Brossard's fiction attests to the intensity of the behind-the-scenes work carried out by translators, and metaphorically reveals the displaced nature of an individual caught between two languages and cultures, such as the entire population of Quebec" (2008, p. 63).

language, no longer inscrutably foreign but made comprehensible in a distinctively domestic style. Translations, in other words, inevitably perform a work of domestication. Those that work best, the most powerful in recreating cultural values and the most responsible in accounting for that power, usually engage readers in domestic terms that have been defamiliarized to some extent, made fascinating by a revisionary encounter with a foreign text. (1998, p. 5)

Domestication, in this usage, refers to shaping the communication in terms familiar to the receiving culture's frameworks or worldview, rather than maintaining frames or aspects of worldview that are disconcerting because of cultural difference, that is, because of the alien or other-ness of the source. No doubt there are double standards that skew when and to what extent source texts are domesticated or not.

For instance, in a critique of a specific, linguistic-oriented theory usually applied to live conversation (Grice's (1968/1989) cooperative principle), Venuti notes that "the remainder, the possibility for variation in any linguistic conjunction, means that the translator works in an asymmetrical relationship, always cooperating more with the domestic than the foreign culture and usually with one constituency among others" (1998, p. 22). It is in that 'cooperation' with the domestic, that is, the rendering of target language fluency and comfortable cultural reference points and markers that the foreignness of an original (e.g., source language) can be left unexpressed, creating the remainder or *non dit*. "Fluent strategies...mystify their domestication of the foreign text while reinforcing dominant domestic values—notably the major language, the standard dialect, [and] possibly other cultural discourses" (Venuti, 1998, p. 22).

The display of fluency to make translation appear easy and feel smooth is what Venuti means by mystification. Challenges, gaps, unbridged differences and hierarchies of power can be hidden by fluency. The co-construction of understanding is mystified,

shared meaning made mysterious, because there is little evidence and few clues to the presence of alternatives. It is against this homogenizing force of fluency that Venuti poses the strategy of foreignization.⁷⁷ Specifically, to resist and remedy domestication, Venuti suggests that translators reproduce the features in language

that signal linguistic and cultural difference...Such translation techniques expose the illusion of transparency by making the translator's work visible, and thereby encouraging a rethinking of the secondary, derivative status of the translator. They also, ironically, preserve important elements of the source text that frequently are smoothed over, elided, and / or adapted to the point that they are no longer recognizable. (Gentzler, 2001, p. 39)

In other words, foreignizing preserves cultural difference. While this section refers specifically to written translation of literature (especially fiction and poetry), the relationships of translators to texts, their authors, and audiences in regard to language and communication is not substantially different from the relationships of interpreters to live utterances and interpretees. Remember, for instance, Hawaiians' choices about participating (and not participating) in interpreting and translation activities (Aiu, 2010) as a way of conducting "ethnic boundary maintenance" (Kroskrity, 2000, p. 25).

Venuti's influence on translation studies and translation itself can hardly be overstated. In the Forward to her edited volume, *Translation, Resistance, Activism*, Maria Tymoczko (2010) states: "Venuti's writings on translation as a mode of resistance and his calls for action addressed to translators were central in motivating discourses about translation, ethics, ideology, and agency" (p. vii). Gentzler too argues that "Venuti's

⁷⁷ Venuti characterizes foreignization as a minoritizing strategy: "Minoritizing translation can...move between cultural constituencies precisely because its heterogeneous discourse is able to support diverse notions of coherence that circulate among different constituencies" (1998, p. 23).

approach outlines the first step in rethinking translation, exposing certain assumptions held by those in institutions governing translation and opening the way for alternative approaches, Venuti's and others'" (2001, p. 43).

2.5 Researcher's Positionality

As researcher, I occupy an interesting positionality (Herr & Anderson, 2005) with respect to the research site. I am an insider of the profession of simultaneous interpretation and an outsider to the European Parliament. During the interviews with EP Interpreters it was common for interpreters to note my identity as an American, e.g., "We don't get too many of those around here" (EPI #48), while identifying with me on the basis of the daunting challenge of providing spontaneous interpretation with integrity.

My differences were of note to some and not to others.⁷⁸ I blended in as a white person.⁷⁹ Many people speak English with a vast array of accents, making my American-ness not particularly obvious. One female Member shared with me an in-depth feminist

⁷⁸ My being American did seem relevant during some conversations with European Parliament Interpreters during the preliminary research phase in 2005, however as a general dynamic the more salient identification was my professional training and experience as an American Sign Language/English interpreter. In 2008-2009, a few Members of the EP were intrigued by my background, but most remained focused on their own thoughts and experiences of being an interpretee in the Parliament.

⁷⁹ The relevance of whiteness is construed differently in Europe than in the United States (and differently in different parts of Europe), but there can be no denying the colonial past or the privileged present. The research conclusions do imply that *whiteness is intertwined with language use in simultaneous interpretation*, but a specific race-based analysis is not conducted. Do make note, however, of the contrasting examples that are provided (e.g., Apache (Basso, 1996), Hawaiians (Aiu, 2010), Huarani (Carcelen-Estrada, 2010), Xavante (Graham, 1995).

critique of the gendered and engendering dynamics of political interaction in the EP.⁸⁰ On a few occasions lesbians co-identified with me and provided helpful background support. I also received substantial assistance, input and guidance from numerous heterosexuals, both male and female.

2.5.1 Questioning Norms

Consistency in the frame of the researcher is a condition for the success of strategic intent (Eden & Huxham, 1996, p. 533). In this case, the intention is to draw the intelligence of Members of the European Parliament to matters of language ideology and the (collective, ritualized) communication practices that they inspire in order to motivate a broad re-evaluation of assumptions about interpreting practices.⁸¹ “The really valuable insights,” say Eden and Huxham, “are often those that emerge... in ways that cannot be foreseen” (p. 533). Real surprises did in fact emerge, slowly and over time, through a continuous process of conversational interviews loosely following Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle of inquiry, comprehension, re-evaluation, and new/revised comprehension. In these conversations, I would ask questions, text my comprehension, re-consider new/different angles and perceptions, generate new understandings and generally do a lot of thinking out loud.

⁸⁰ In reference to gender and “multiple inequalities” in the EU, Mieke Verloo argues: “It has become clear that attention to structural mechanisms and to the role of the state and the private sphere in reproducing inequalities is much needed” (2006, p. 211).

⁸¹ For instance: “The negative effects of these [identified] factors [of source language production by MEPs] on the interpreter’s performance have been discussed in the SI literature (e.g., Gerver 1969, Seleskovitch 1982, Lederer 1978/2002), yet the practice of reading out written speeches from manuscripts continues” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 184).

In order to really comprehend the system, it was necessary for me to question norms and explore the boundaries of acceptable practice. Occasionally this brought me into conflict with the administration, enough so that at one point I thought about calling the method guerrilla research. In an effort to pursue “the opportunities for triangulation that do not offer themselves with other methods” (Eden & Huxhom, 1996, p. 539), on one occasion (during the second research period, 2008-2009), I slipped postcards under the doors of the interpreters’ booths during a meeting that I was observing, asking them to email me if they noticed any glitches with the communication. The principle of action research is that such efforts must be “exploited fully and reported. They should be used as a dialectical device” (p 539).

Soon afterwards, I was cautioned that my badge (issued by an MEP) would be revoked (by the administration) if I entered the interpreters’ booth space again. On another occasion, after being advised (from the left hand, so to speak) that interpreters might be willing to help me on a volunteer basis during unscheduled time, interpreters were directed (from the right hand, as it were) not to cooperate with my requests for interpreting assistance. After these boundaries were established I was cautious not to violate them, although I did persist in posting in my blog and some people (from within and outside of Parliament) did engage me via email.

There were public demonstrations of support for my research by interpreters (some of whom held positions within the AIIC Negotiating Delegation for the EU⁸²) who supported and encouraged me offline, and a few who would leave their booth and approach me, visible to everyone, where I sat for observations at a desk on the floor of meeting rooms, asking if they could be of particular assistance to me in that setting. The politics of my presence was made apparent. My hope, then and now, is to transcend controversy by focusing on the research outcomes, which are of general interest to anyone concerned with language difference and cultural equality, and in particular how these can be mobilized to stabilize economies and ease local conflict.

2.6 The Premier Case Study

In 2004, Anna-Riita Vuorikoski published her study of political speech in the European Parliament, assessing “whether interpreters’ versions of the speeches allowed the listeners to receive the same impression of the speakers’ messages and intentions as people receive when listening to the original” (p. 16). She gave special attention to the collaboration from Members in generating source texts (STs) that facilitate “an unhampered flow of communication in a meeting (cf Kalina 2002)” (p. 16). She focused particularly on qualities of “planned and scripted texts [that] are part of the discourse” during plenaries (p. 19), contrasting these with the orality (cf Shlesinger) of speeches

⁸² The International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) is “a worldwide representative organisation, AIIC...[who] negotiates the terms and conditions of the interpreters who work for the EU organisations. The sector includes several institutions, chief amongst them are: European Commission, European Parliament and the European Court of Justice. The **AIIC-EU Agreement** applies to all interpreters who work for the institutions, members and non-members alike.” Retrieved 4 March 2014, from <http://aiic.net/directories/aiic/sectors/>.

delivered without a written text. Her research is firmly planted in the equivalence paradigm, focused on “the *faithful* transmission of a source language message, rendered *accurately* in the target language” (emphasis in original, p. 19).⁸³ [Notice: If I rewrote her statement to reflect the emphasis of this communication research it would be on *transmission*.]⁸⁴ She clarifies, importantly, that “these criteria (accuracy, faithfulness, etc.) will not advance our understanding of SI quality unless they are linked with a theoretically grounded analysis of empirical material” (p. 88).

Vuorikoski maintains the ideological hegemony of the original speaker’s source text through a concise yet comprehensive review of major models and theories of interpreting. She also cites studies (Kurz, 1989; Moser, 1995) confirming that the most

⁸³ “‘Equivalence’...is an old concept in translation studies...[it] has been chosen as the key concept for getting hold of the elusive idea of ‘sense consistency with the original message’, which, according to theories of interpreting, is not, and must never be, tantamount to word-for-word translation” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 22). Vuorikoski acknowledges that the framing of her “[research] question echoes Eugene Nida’s (1969) ideas of dynamic equivalence as well as the definition by Déjean Le Féal (1990)” (p. 25). She also cites Halverson (1998), Lederer (1977), Mackintosh (1995) and Snell-Hornby (1988).

⁸⁴ The argument will show that an exclusive emphasis on the transmission of information feeds the illusions of faithfulness and accuracy, ritually recreating the myth of their possibility rather than engaging what Vuorikoski also acknowledges: “on-the-job experiences both in the EP and elsewhere have repeatedly confirmed the observation that non-correspondences between the original speeches and their interpreted versions are the rule rather than an exception. This observation has been confirmed by I[nterpreting] S[tudies] scholars starting with Oléron and Nanpon (1965/2002), Gerver (1969/2002), and Barik (1975/2002)...[and others]” (2004, p. 89-90). The argument of this dissertation is that the fact of non-correspondence neither invalidates meaning-making nor destroys meaningful connections (e.g., Chang, 1995). The fact of non-correspondence is not, however, construed as an excuse or justification for poor performances, but is predicated on faith in the integrity of interpreters. As Vuorikoski puts it, “We can take it for granted, however, that *interpreters strive for maximum correspondence with the original speech, including maximum accuracy and faithfulness*” (italics in original, p. 90).

important criteria for (so-called) “end users of SI” (p. 45) is the sense consistency of the interpreter’s version of ‘the message’ with the speaker’s version of ‘the message.’ Kurz’s and Moser’s surveys were influenced by a survey Bühler (1986) conducted of “linguistic (semantic) and extra-linguistic (pragmatic) criteria” used by established professionals within the profession when considering the admission of new professional colleagues to the elite International Association of Conference Interpreters (known by its French acronym, AIIC) (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 44). In other words, even though designed to assess the priorities of interpretees, the items available for rating by end-users were pre-determined by interpreters.

Recognizing some limits of this framing, such as the fact that “most members of the audience do not concentrate on comparing the original with the interpreter’s version even if it were technically possible” (p. 46), Vuorikoski (2004) designed another study⁸⁵ which investigated whether audience members believed the “interpreting had been ‘informed’” (p. 46). Despite reducing the criteria and seeking to adapt the terminology for non-linguist laypersons, she still encountered difficulties: individuals did not necessarily attribute the same meanings to the terms, in some cases revealing that they did not interpret the dynamics of the interpreting process in the same ways as interpreters themselves. Vuorikoski concluded: “the quality criteria were not operational for research purposes as they meant different things to different people” (p. 47).

Leaving aside the problem of assessing interpretees’ evaluations of interpreting quality, Vuorikoski refined her question to seek the features in target texts (TTs: the

⁸⁵ Prior to the 2004 study summarized in detail here, Vuorikoski conducted a survey with audience members in 1995, using the metric of “informed.” See Vuorikoski (1993, 1995, 1997).

interpreted versions of speeches) that “*convey the ‘sense of the original message’, enabling those listening to the interpreters to have the same basis for creating an impression of the incoming speech as those listening directly to the original*” (emphasis in original, 2004, p. 48). While acknowledging communication as transaction,⁸⁶ Vuorikoski presents her research fully within the traditional linguistics-oriented paradigm. She asserts that “professional interpreters have described the task of the interpreter...[in] the core issues of communication, that is, how ideas are expressed and how the ideas of others are understood” (p. 50). Vuorikoski’s focus is on the ideas (aka, information).

Performing a comparative content analysis brought her right up against the problem of meaning. “Pragmatics together with cognitive linguistics, not to mention the key philosophers of language, provide a number of approaches to and definitions of what is meant by ‘meaning’. (See e.g., Meyer 1986; Leech 1991/1983: 30-35)” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 59). Vuorikoski chooses a psycholinguistically-informed macro-structural method combining Pöchhacker (1994) and Shlesinger (1989a) in order to “focus...on the substance of the speeches and on the issue of the interpreter’s primary task of conveying this substance to listeners” (p. 59). She adapts Williams (2001) argumentation theory (in keeping with new rhetoric theory, e.g., Kenneth Burke, Chaim Perelman (1982) and Stephen Toulmin)⁸⁷ for the content analysis rather than worrying about microtextual

⁸⁶ Quoting Hatim & Mason (1990), see more on the conceptual difference between interaction and transaction in chapter six.

⁸⁷ “New rhetoric covers all discourse that does not aim at general truths. In new rhetoric, ‘argument’ refers to the various textual means of aiming at either accepting or rejecting the thesis under dispute” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 60, cf Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958/1968)).

errors or omissions. This move seems to open up more roles of participation in the interpreted event, because the role of the audience is crucial: “In Perelman’s view, there is no argumentation without an audience” (p. 60).

The size of Vuorikoski’s (2004) corpus of “120 speeches and interventions” (p. 91) made by MEPs and members of the European Commission during plenary debates in a hemicycle at the European Parliament, and the diligence of her analysis of the spontaneously-generated interpretations by European Parliament interpreters, are beyond impressive.⁸⁸ She has carefully selected and blended insights from a variety of theorists in translation studies, discourse analysis (especially Adam, 1999) and cognitive linguistics (Setton, 1999). Controls are established to obtain a corpus across authentic, parallel simultaneous interpretations of original speeches to overcome the limitations of previous studies (cf Gile, 1990; Kalina, 1998; Setton, 1999; Pöchhacker, 1994).

The conditions of video-recording several interpreters’ simultaneous interpretations for comparison with the video-recorded original speeches by Members are carefully laid out within the macrostructure of the European Parliament as a producer of its own unique genre. The specific context of each recorded plenary meeting is explained

⁸⁸ The 120 original speeches include 54 in English, 11 in Finnish, 44 in German and 11 in Swedish, and “includes the interpretations of these speeches into these four languages, i.e., three [target text] versions of each speech” and “the verbatim reports ...[which] contain slightly edited versions of all the speeches in the original languages” and additional supporting materials (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 92). Seventy-seven speakers compose the entire corpus; excluded are speeches made in Danish, Dutch, French, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish (p. 96). For the analysis, there are “65 speeches by 50 speakers...the exact number of interpreters...is more difficult to count...the 37 interpreters (three per language booth plus the extra pivots) take their turns according to their language combination. A rough estimate of the number of interpreters included in the corpus is 30; the report discusses the TTs of around 20 interpreters” (p. 97-98).

within the context of a very structured monthly flow of committee and political group meetings (two weeks and one week, respectively) in preparation for the full parliament plenaries (one week). She explains that most utterances of Members in debate are document-driven, that is, in reference to a report or pending piece of legislation, although some refer to institutional issues or politics more broadly.

With the exception of the meetings of the political groups, the debates of all the regular meetings are based on documents, most typically draft legislation. This has an immediate influence on the nature of the discourse that interpreters are expected to interpret. The printed documents contain not only codes, terms and concepts that are part of the speakers' discourse, but they also contain text passages that speakers may quote by reciting them from the documents. (p. 80)

The provision of documents in a timely manner is thus one indicator of Members' collaboration with interpreters. Vuorikoski does not elaborate on this except to point out situations when "interpreters received them shortly prior to the start of the debate, which meant that there was not enough time to read the documents beforehand" (p. 82).⁸⁹ Overall, Vuorikoski proceeds on the presumption that "the speaker plays a crucial role in the achievement of quality in interpreting...the key question...to explore is what facilitates this collaboration and what may obstruct it" (p. 88).

Refining the research question, Vuorikoski moves to investigate the extent to which non-correspondences (that is, non-equivalencies) between the interpreted version and the original version "hamper the listener from creating an equivalent representation of the speaker's message to that of a fellow member of the audience listening to the

⁸⁹ "The documents containing the MEPs' draft resolutions only reach the interpreters' booths shortly before they are discussed. Consequently, interpreters have only a limited time to have a look at them before the debate begins" (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 216).

original speaker” (2004, p. 90). She could be establishing a foundation for broadening the analysis from a strict comparison between the two texts (original, interpreted) to include a triangulation of meaning-making among audience members. Most significantly, by the careful research design guaranteeing multiple versions generated under identical conditions, Vuorikoski has established a way of locating common causes for omissions and errors (classic evidence of non-correspondence) *in the source language as uttered by the speaker* rather than in the interpreted version rendered by the interpreter.

Building on the assumption that interpreters are aiming for maximum correspondence, however it is labelled (as accuracy or faithfulness), “*if at least two of the three interpreters fail to convey information that is relevant or important considering the speech as an entity, this failure may be caused by some characteristic in the ST [source text]*” (emphasis in original, Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 98). Her goal is “to find features in the STs that can be used to determine the *de facto* constraints of the SI method” (p. 100). Vuorikoski distinguishes between “minor non-correspondences between the STs and TTs which...shift the angle or emphasis of the original to some extent, but the audience will still get the main gist of the speaker’s message...[and instances when] the information content of the ST may be translated [sic] incorrectly, or that essential elements of the content have been omitted” (p. 104).

In keeping with the political context, three categories of deviations (in the TT from the ST) proved significant: rhetorical devices, argumentation features, and semantic or propositional content (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 107). These are explored in “different text profiles from the point of view of SI processing”: specifically a general topic that “does not set high demands;” an EU topic requiring institutional knowledge, and topics or

issues “which require an up-to-date knowledge of world affairs” (p. 117). These typical (to the EP) text profiles are broken down in terms of the main arguments and speech acts in the ST and the non-correspondences in the TTs (p. 118). Crucially, in the context of the EP, the most important goals of argumentation are “1) to make the audience adhere to the argumentation; 2) to make the argumentation more effective; 3) to make the argument more persuasive” (Vuorikoski summarizing Perelman, 2004, p. 126).

2.6.1 Key Finding: Social Problems are More Relevant than Linguistic Problems

Regarding the matter of speakers collaborating with interpreters, the most consistent and dramatic patterns involve speed. Both the pace of delivery and turn-taking often occur too quickly for interpreters to accomplish a quality rendition. For instance,

In the corpus at hand, interpreters often omit material from the final points of the speech. This may be determined by the speech situation where interpreters have to finish speaking immediately after the speaker has stopped, as the President will give the floor to the next speaker, mentioning his name and political group. These are items that must be rendered by the interpreters, too. Here is a paradoxical situation. Interpreters are instructed to lag behind the speaker in order to get hold of the idea he [or she] is developing before producing their SI version. Yet in the fast moving debate interpreters must stop speaking as soon as the speaker finishes. Thus, even if they only lag a little bit behind the speaker they may have to skip several items of the speech, or condense the final phrases into something that sounds logical in the context. Consequently, the rhetorical effect of the original speech is lost in the TTs. (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 126)

Vuorikoski’s finding confirms and corroborates Gerver’s previous finding (1969/2002), in which he “was able to conclude that simultaneous interpreting provides empirical proof of ‘an information-handling system which is subject to overload *if required to carry out more complex processes at too fast a rate and copes with overload by reaching*

a steady state of throughput *at the expense of an increase in errors and omissions*” (emphasis in original, Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 99).

In other words, in addition to the pace demand, the desire for flow forces interpreters to (try to) generate prosody (‘something that sounds logical’) according to the (familiar) terms of the target language (an example of what Venuti would call domestication) at the expense of the (supposedly more important) content of the source language. Also, the equivalence criterion of ‘sense consistency with the original message’ combined with the time demand often puts interpreters in the position of needing to choose between “the semantic content and the illocutionary force of an argument” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 128). As with any speech act in any communication event, “It is up to each interpreter to decide what that ‘sense’ is” (p. 131); each interpretee *and non-interpretee* (in the case of Members listening to the original because they share that language) also individually decides ‘the sense’ of the message. Rarely questioned is the assumption that all listeners (without the mediation of SI) not only could, but actually do interpret the original in the same way. Assuming a uniform, automatic correspondence of comprehension between source text and all receivers is also troubled by the evidence of non-correspondences in interpreted texts.

Specifically, “when the speaker’s rate of delivery is fast, and the ST syntax is complicated, consisting of agent constructions and several qualifiers, for example, interpreters are no longer able to convey all the lexical and illocutionary elements of the speech” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 142-143). The speech act category of implied criticism is also more difficult to interpret “in a rapid flow of speech” (p. 143). Additionally, “metaphorical language is often the reason for discontinuities in the TT’s” (p. 150) and

“in most cases, figurative speech is not conveyed successfully in the TTs” (p. 163).

Vuorikoski does not speculate if a reason for this may be the (lack) of additional processing time provided to interpreters in order to comprehend the work that a metaphor is being used for in the given instance and also compose a suitable parallel. She does make a temporal link with humor, irony and sarcasm: “these rhetoric devices may not be easy to identify in a rapid flow of speech, nor to translate and produce at the pace set by the speaker” (p. 167).

Vuorikoski also suggests that omissions or inaccuracies in interpreting “EU-related concepts” into TTs (2004, p. 172), which are assumed to be known by interpreters on the basis of experience and general job preparation,⁹⁰ “may be due to the fast rate at which the speaker reads” (p. 173). She contextualizes non-correspondences involving retour interpretations: “It has to be borne in mind, again, that the STs were written and read from scripts without pauses or marked emphasis on individual terms, concepts or other keywords” (p. 177). “Even the most frequent abbreviations,” she continues, “...[tend] to suffer in a rapid stream of ST speech, complicated by a relatively dense syntax...as well as colorful expressions (*‘tinkering with funding’*) in collocation with EU terminology ([in this case] CAP programs)” (p. 178-179). Generally, “an increase in presentation rate, and a decrease in the length and number of pauses separating meaning units, correlate positively with the number of omissions and errors” (p. 236).

⁹⁰ “Speakers expect the names of the various EU or other international conferences to be shared knowledge” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 170); and “In terms of shared background knowledge it can be assumed that MEPs as well as interpreters with experience at the EP know what is meant by the various Objectives and how the Structural Funds are governed and administered” (p. 202).

Tools that work to clue interpreters in to features of argumentation include repetition (e.g., p. 148); rhetorical questions (p. 148-149); “using uncomplicated [syntactical] structures” (p. 197); “coherence...which focuses on one point” (p. 197); “focusing on key issues...[and] present[ing] ideas or questions in a straightforward manner” (p. 206); “clearly marked themes” (p. 226); “adjust[ing written speeches] for oral presentation” (p. 226); and contributing to prior knowledge of interpreters through advance provision of documents. When “interpreters have the opportunity to become familiar with the topic and the key concepts of the meeting[,] They can therefore be expected to have at least some degree of *shared knowledge* with the speakers” (emphasis added, p. 152). Implied is that speeches that conform to a rhetorical pattern consistent with the unique genre of the EP are also more likely to be interpreted effectively. These rhetorical features include:

- the speeches are characterized by traditional structure of argumentation: the speakers introduce their topic, discuss it, and conclude by presenting their final point;
- the main arguments are based on values shared by EU;
 - the MEPs are acting as guardians of democracy;
 - MEPs as spokesmen of the citizens;
 - they emphasize the role of the European Parliament;
- they indicate the speakers’ stance towards the topic of the meeting. (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 153)

This is a discourse structure that interpreters will assume as a roadmap to where one is going (see Tebble on discourse analysis in chapter three).

One speech in Vuorikoski’s corpus “contained the largest number of various types of non-correspondences with the original. The speech is clearly a carefully prepared

written document. The speaker simply read it out loud from the manuscript and most of the argumentation was lost in all three TT versions” (2004, p. 154). Interpreters seemed not to have had access to the prepared text; or at least not in time to actually read and process it.

[This] confirms what Setton has observed in his study: ‘Even in professional SI, serious breakdowns may occur when concentrated written text is read as it stands with no warning or documentary support, [...]’ (1999: 256).

In contrast to that German speech, the English speeches delivered [in the same setting] can all be characterized as more spoken-like in their rhetoric formation and their argumentation. There are very few instances where all three interpreters omit relevant items or argumentation or distort the meaning altogether. (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 154)

All of the analysis leads to a major conclusion: “Failures in TTs are to a large extent linked with the characteristics of the ST” (p. 155).⁹¹

2.6.1.1 The Unshared Knowledge Constraint

It is well established in the SI literature that “the availability—or unavailability—of shared information may affect the interpreter’s reconstruction of the speaker’s message (Shlesinger 1995b: 195)” (in Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 216). For her (2004) research, Vuorikoski included a session called ‘debates on topical and urgent subjects of major importance’ based on her own experience. “When I was working as a freelance interpreter for the EU...this session taxes the interpreter’s world knowledge

⁹¹ Not allowing time exacerbates other problems in the source texts (STs), which include: use of “a coined compound like ‘intergovernmentalism’” (p. 165); sarcastic analogies (p. 166); “a witty rhetoric device of adapting a familiar figure of speech” (p. 166-167); “*ad hoc* metaphors” (p. 169); personification (p. 171-172); “if the speaker refers to isolated issues...as well as political items...which have no metatextual links to previous utterances” (p. 174) or are “lack[ing] metatextual elements for linking the various items, or for foregrounding them” (p. 191); acronyms and/or “the reasons for referring to them” can be problematic during retour (p. 175); complicated syntax such as deixis, reiteration, and “the use of marked syntactic constructions like [in this example] *nicht* + noun – *sondern* + noun) in order to highlight the main argument” (p. 180), and (for an example of complicated syntax in English) a segment containing “eight elements that need to be processed...[including] some of these items do not have a direct equivalent in other languages (‘fail to complete’, telecoms’)” (p. 182); “ideas are expressed in long and complicated sentences” (p. 184) or “dense with references to various proper names and concepts” (p. 191); “facts and figures are easily confused” (p. 222); “lists” (p. 228); “semantically close lexical units” (p. 221); “alternating between reading from...notes and speaking freely” (p. 199); in sum, certain syntactic elements such as “linguistic devices creating cohesion and coherence *in a written text*; negative constructions; genitive constructions with several modifiers; elliptic infinite constructions that contain several objects” are “unsuited for the oral translation [sic] of aurally received texts” (emphasis added, p. 208). In particular, “Speeches [that] have been prepared and written in advance [if] they tend to follow the cohesive devices that are characteristic of literary style” (p. 226).

even more than either the debates on the reports dealing with draft legislation or the debates dealing with EU institutional issues” (p. 216). The sample reported in her analysis includes “human rights issues...that could be described as exotic or remote from the point of view of a rank-and-file interpreter” (p. 218). Again, she notes that many (if not most or even nearly all) of the identified problems with STs are compounded by “the fact that speakers read their texts, referring to issues and names that are not known to the interpreters” (p. 231).

Sharing knowledge is possible only under conditions of “mutual intelligibility” (drawing upon Bakhtin (1984), in Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 68). This is the lens Vuorikoski applies: “The discourse of the European Parliament...is an example of a genre created within one institution, and the features of this genre can be studied from the point of view of discourse analysis, pragmatics in particular, and text linguistics” (p. 67-68). Generating “mutual understanding” (p. 206) requires conformity to the capability constraints of simultaneous interpretation. These are empirically identified and theoretically explained by Vuorikoski in support of previous assertions and theory regarding the factual nature of these constraints. Her results demonstrate divergences in genre performances by Members of the European Parliament from the conditions required to generate shared understanding across language differences.

Reading verbatim from texts written with literary conventions violates orality. “Shlesinger [1989] uses ‘orality’ to mean the spoken-like vs written-like character of the text, as distinct from its mode” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 42). Two of Shlesinger’s four parameters of orality are relevant to Vuorikoski’s study: the “degree of planning” (which implicates time) and “shared context and knowledge” (p. 42) “**Shared context**, which

includes knowledge pertaining to the speaker; the intention of the utterance; situational and circumstantial parameters, and other extralinguistic knowledge” (emphasis in original, p. 43) comes into play with the provision of speech texts and other supporting documentation prior to interpreting assignments. “When evaluating the performances of the interpreters in the present corpus, the parameter of shared context is crucial, and the aspect of shared knowledge in particular” (p. 43).⁹²

Meetings for urgent issues involving human rights and democracy are conducted under the same regime of simultaneous interpretation as other meetings. Interpreters may or may not receive documentation or texts of speeches in advance. “The speaker has been assigned 3 minutes’ speaking time. He has a written speech which he recites in a manner typical of a classroom reading exercise” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 219). The analysis in this context highlights the impact of the lack of shared knowledge between MEPs and interpreters (p. 96). “The more specific the speaker is, the less of the content of the speech is conveyed in the TT. This is even more so when the speech is read at a fast rate” (p. 219). Comparing the practically random scene of an urgent meeting with the scene of other meetings in which interpreters have already read the report and related documents,

⁹² Vuorikoski presents Lederer’s view on shared knowledge in relation to notions of equivalence: “For Lederer, finding an ‘equivalent’ expression in the TL is not the best method of interpreting. In her view, the important element of ‘intelligent’ interpreting is to be free of the wording of the original speech. According to her theory, the best method is to produce an ‘intelligent’ interpretation instead of *merely* establishing equivalents between two languages. According to her observations, this procedure is resorted to by interpreters until they have accumulated shared knowledge with the speaker(s). Once the interpreter begins to understand the theme and topic of the speech he is translating, he probes more and more deeply into the intended meaning of the speaker, leading to a different SI technique where the interpretation departs from the linguistic meaning of the source text (1978/2001: 132)” (in Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 53).

Vuorikoski's empirical evidence shows beyond a doubt that "the interpreter's knowledge of the topic of the meeting does, in fact, have a positive effect on the quality of interpreting' (p. 152).

Three inter-related features of the system of SI in the EP are drawn into high-relief by Vuorikoski's study: temporality, varying quality of source text production by speakers, and the degree of effort given to constructing shared knowledge among interpreters and interpretees within the shared institutional context. Another problem that confounds interpretation involves the integrity of speakers' utterances. "Accuracy of interpreting would be greatly enhanced if the speech acts were conveyed faithfully. The party addressed, or the person used by the speaker, as well as the political group the speaker commits himself to, should be rendered faithfully" (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 208-209).⁹³

2.6.1.2 An Integrity Problem?

"If it is in the speaker's interest that his [or her] speech is conveyed accurately and faithfully by the interpreters, he [or she] could collaborate with interpreters by avoiding the ST features enumerated" as problematic (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 236).

Members of the European Parliament could speak more slowly, provide more and longer

⁹³ Raunio (1996) explores the behavior of political groups in the EP during the fifth term (1989-1994), which is the term previous to the 'big bang enlargement' term covered here. Hill (2000) describes "ideological complexity" in campaign speech in the United States "distinguish[ing] two distinct language ideological discourses: the discourse of truth and the discourse of theater. The former is a more popular perspective grounded in expectations of 'informed choice' and 'full disclosure' and indexically linked to personalist readings of 'moral character.' The latter discourse is controlled by campaign specialists who worry about their candidate's 'performing' their 'messages' in appropriately staged venues" (Kroskrity, 2000, p. 18).

pauses, minimize textual density, and adapt written scripts to an oral presentation style. Vuorikoski has asked, “If the argumentation, the speech act, and the relevant vocabulary are not rendered in the TT, what are the features in the ST that explain the shortcomings in equivalence?” (p. 158). My fieldwork shows that some advice about structuring their speeches to be more amenable to interpretation is either given to Members formally or they learn it on their own; the question then becomes, why are Members not cooperating?

For instance, why do Members persist in reading from manuscripts as fast as possible without inflection when there is incontrovertible evidence this ST production leads to interpreting errors?⁹⁴ Why is the matter of interpreter overload ignored even as MEPs complain about the evidence when “the interpreter’s output suffers, showing an increase in the number of errors and omissions?” (p. 194). If interpreters’ outputs show evidence of strain, this is a signal to the institution not only about information transfer, but, importantly, about rituals of communication that establish identity and relationship.

The problem is no longer a question about language and linguistics; it is a question about social organization and relationships characterized by, and encompassing, language difference. Bear in mind that Vuorikoski set out to identify and “highlight the constraints involved in the simultaneous mode of translation [sic]” (2004, p. 185). Her assumption “that failures in the parallel TTs in the same segment of the same ST will provide empirical data about textual features that hamper or obstruct an accurate

⁹⁴ Vuorikoski repeats the claim several times with increasing stridency: “The simultaneous mode is particularly ill suited for the translation [sic] of a written speech which is read from notes at a fast rate” (2004, p. 204).

rendering of the ST [by interpreters]” (p. 184) is supported by her close analysis. To make the case, she selected samples from the corpus that showed these problems; *not* samples that effectively generated equivalence.^{95, 96}

In nearly all cases, even the most egregious speeches, “there are segments that are rendered quite successfully” (p. 205). Vuorikoski (2004) determined that “the more closely interpreters conveyed elements related to argumentation, the more accurately they managed to convey the sense of the message. These elements are not strictly language-specific; instead, they are used to express a speaker’s line of reasoning in a way which is common to all” and (not incidentally!) helps *all* listeners (my emphasis, p. 234). Functional linguistics and textual analysis undergirds the new rhetoric/argumentation theory Vuorikoski has deployed to diagnose the problem.⁹⁷ Another frame is needed to move to the next level.

⁹⁵ “The segments that were selected for close scrutiny...represent topics and linguistic features that at least two out of three interpreters did not render correctly” (p. 236).

⁹⁶ Vuorikoski also emphasizes the necessity of interpreter fluency, their “knowledge and command of the languages in question” (p. 236) and notes differences between novice and experienced EP interpreters based on the time required to build sufficient institutional and contextual shared knowledge (p. 174).

⁹⁷ “Linguistics has always been interested in problems because they bring out the contrast between what is ‘normal’ or ‘standard’ and what requires further study. In the present investigation, the problem segments were selected in order to highlight the factors which make simultaneous interpreting difficult” (p. 236). Vuorikoski names “three main angles” of analysis suited to the EP’s unique genre (rhetorical elements, speech acts, and the semantic and syntactic aspects of the speeches) “based on the premise that essential elements of the sense of the message are contained in argumentation” (p. 233).

2.7 Scrutinizing a Scandal

As we have seen, theoretical diversification and ungroundedness in translation studies was challenged by Venuti and others (e.g., Aiu, 2010; Carcelen-Estrada, 2010; Gentzler, 2008; Tymoczko, 2007, 2010). In particular, Venuti's (1998) *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* explores, among other things, the "self-inflicted marginality" (p. x) of translation studies. "With rare exceptions," Venuti argues, "scholars have been reluctant to negotiate areas of agreement and to engage more deeply with the cultural, political, and institutional problems posed by translation (for an exception see Hatim and Mason 1997)" (p. 9).⁹⁸ In contrast, interpreting studies appears to be trying to negotiate intradisciplinary agreement without taking critical stock of the cultural, political and institutional problems evident to at least some participants in the field.⁹⁹ This dissertation addresses this gap through a combination of foreignization and critical discourse analysis. Juxtaposing a collectivized and empowered Deaf voice with some critical strands of translation research brings paradigm conflict into view, raising more questions than answers while charting, albeit optimistically, some potential strategies for social change.

⁹⁸ Basil Hatim and Ian Mason build their definition of translation on the idea that all texts are seen 'as evidence of a **communicative transaction taking place within a social framework**' (original emphasis)...according to them, translation—including simultaneous interpreting—is communicative discourse (1990: 2-3)" (in Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 50). For instance, regarding argumentation, Hatim & Mason note that "persuasive strategies may differ in different cultures" (1997, p. 127).

⁹⁹ *Critical* in the context of use throughout this dissertation means taking stock of power and keeping power in the account. Fairclough (1989, 1995) is a key resource for critical discourse analysis, as is Stuart Hall, seminal to the field of cultural studies, which establishes a position from which "to take some bearings about the general question of the politics of theory" (Hall, 1992, p. 278).

While the selection of theorists and concepts utilized in service of this action research project may appear eclectic, it is not mere bricolage. I approach simultaneous interpretation as an institutionalized intercultural practice, that is, as a particular and specific kind of social organization that binds together people(s) who are inherently diverse and heterogeneous.¹⁰⁰ While there is no one “organization” in the literal sense of a singular club, business, non-profit, governmental or other corporate entity that encompasses the whole social practice of simultaneous interpreting, the essential hypothesis of this research is that the social practice *itself* is unified and unifying, with both adverse consequences and productive implications. As an intercultural social practice, simultaneous interpretation communicates identities in time and regulates relationships in space. The entire presentation is framed as action learning into the realm

¹⁰⁰ Like any other social practice, interpreting and especially discourses about interpreting, are inherently ideological. Kroskrity (2000) proposes “it is profitable to think of ‘language ideologies’ as a cluster concept consisting of a number of converging dimensions” (p. 7). “First, *language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group*” (p. 8). “Second, *language ideologies are profitably conceived as multiple because of the multiplicity of meaningful social divisions (class, gender, clan, elites, generations, and so on) within sociocultural groups that have the potential to produce divergent perspectives expressed as indices of group membership*. Language ideologies are thus grounded in social experience which is never uniformly distributed throughout polities of any scale” (p. 12). “Third, *members may display varying degrees of awareness of local language ideologies*. While the Silverstein (1979) definition quoted above [see footnote #56] suggests that language ideologies may often be explicitly articulated by members, researchers also recognize ideologies of practice that must be read from actual usage” (p. 18-19). “Finally, *members’ language ideologies mediate between social structures and forms of talk*. The dynamic and synthetic role of ideologies is especially well-captured in Silverstein’s (1985:220) appeal to the necessity of including this often neglected and delegitimated level of language analysis: ‘The total linguistic fact, the datum for a science of language, is irreducibly dialectic in nature. It is an unstable mutual interaction of meaningful sign forms contextualized to situations of interested human use and mediated by the fact of cultural ideology’” (in Kroskrity, p. 21).

of meta-discourse about simultaneous interpretation because it is an extension of the researcher's critical reflections of personal and professional experience¹⁰¹ on two counts of being a privileged outsider: to Deaf culture¹⁰² and to conference interpreting.¹⁰³ The on-going action research question involves whether this foray can be continued through engaging interpretees in addition to interpreters in more reflexivity about simultaneous interpretation as an activist strategy for maintaining language diversity and promoting cultural equality.

Steyaert and Janssens (2013) define three strategies for introducing reflexivity into organizational thinking about languages: scrutinization, scandalization, and invention. These strategies neatly describe the “action” dimension of research conducted during conversational interviews with Members of the European Parliament. By engaging with Members as already critical and reflexive thinkers about interpreting, our conversations about the use and understanding of the system of interpreting in the EP generated insights about simultaneous interpretation as a potentially productive intervention in intercultural communication. For instance, by drawing Members' attention to the presumed normalcy of ignoring the interpretation process, the apparently natural trend to using English as lingua franca (ELF) was (at least potentially) troubled.

¹⁰¹ “Experience cannot be mistaken, though we may be misled by it” (Moore, 1996, p. 73), discussing the philosophy of Henri Bergson.

¹⁰² From the Deaf standpoint, I am Hearing person who learned American Sign Language as an adult, eventually becoming an interpreter through a mix of socializing and professional schooling.

¹⁰³ My status as an American researcher in Europe, my bilingualism involving a sign language rather than another spoken language, and my career in community interpreting all marked me as an outsider to the conference interpreting milieu in the European Parliament.

Steyaert and Janssons explain:

The way we use and adopt languages is never natural; instead, it is the effect of a complex process with cultural, historical, institutional and political dimensions. Certain standard explanations or widespread discourses have been prioritized, implying that we have to be wary of any kind of naturalization in language practices. (p. 133)

Establishing action research as the methodology allows investigatory latitude to deviate from pre-scripted interviews and pre-defined problematics to explore tangents and alternatives that were un-anticipated or otherwise emerge spontaneously during co-intelligent dialogue.¹⁰⁴

The strategy of scrutinization (Steyaert and Janssons, 2013) is used for “examining how certain linguistic resources are prioritized in the field and inquiring into the various consequences of that choice” (p. 136). Scrutinization was used pervasively, including when the other strategies of scandalization and invention were foregrounded. Attempting to generate “awareness of and agony about the hegemony of English” (p. 134) through a scandalization strategy was not a preconceived goal of this action research. Rather, scandalization in this context was intended “to provocatively point out the flagrant problems with the current policies and practices” (p. 134) *of the system* of simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament. In other words, the targeted scandal was not the use of English, per se, but the less tangible implicit norms of expectation regarding the implementation and use of simultaneous interpretation. These norms include, for instance, prohibitions regarding interacting with simultaneous

¹⁰⁴ “In its broadest sense, co-intelligence involves accessing the wisdom of the whole on behalf of the whole” (Tom Atlee, The Co-Intelligence Institute. Retrieved 24 February 2014, <http://www.co-intelligence.org/>).

interpreters. This interaction taboo (Kent, 2012) supports a normative ideology that positions interpreters as if they are not co-participants in this special practice of intercultural communication.

What Steyaert and Jannsons call invention is a strategy for what Aristotle called productive knowledge. In contrast with theoretical knowledge, whose goal is truths, and practical knowledge, which aims at action, productive knowledge is “directed towards the creation of artifacts of all sorts...[specifically of] grasping the nature of the productive processes by which [for instance] tragedies and the tragic effects are produced” (in F.C.T. Moore, 1996, p. 70). Taken in total, cultural discourse from Deaf communities are ambivalent about interpreting. While the gains of communication access are notable and appreciated, the American Deaf community in particular can seem traumatized by interpreting moreso than rescued by it.¹⁰⁵

The ambition of this research project is to collect both theoretical and practical knowledge in service of productive knowledge. It is a daunting prospect made possible only through the stance of action learning. I have been regularly and consistently humbled by the wisdom of interviewees, professional interpreting colleagues, and academic peers and mentors. Their insights over the duration of this research project have contributed greatly to the resulting representation. “Precision,” according to Henri

¹⁰⁵ A primary resource for the assumptions and motivations of this research is the researcher’s lived experience (e.g., van Manen, 1990).

Bergson, a French philosopher who uses *time* as the measure of all things,¹⁰⁶ “consists in the adaptation of methods,” specifically, “methods of enquiry to the subject-matter” (p.11). Jumping among interpersonal and institutional levels of analysis has served in the fashion of triangulation to sharpen and pinpoint the focus of interpretive critique on humans immediate awareness (or lack thereof) of *durance*, of what is being co-constructed as human culture because of certain unquestioned practices of simultaneous interpretation and through the performances of these practices in intercultural social transaction.

Bergson commentator F.C.T. Moore chooses *durance* in English as a translation for the French *durée* to emphasize Bergson’s wish to draw attention to “*the fact or property of going through time*” rather than “to refer to a measurable period of time during which something happens” as in the more literal translation, *duration* (emphasis in original, 1996, p. 58). Discourses about interpreting revolve around time in a way that recommend Bergson’s framing of this particular problematic:

When we are concerned with measurement, as we frequently have good reason to be, we use a clock, taking it as the standard. But why should the motions of a clock be privileged? Why should the successive ticks or the successive vibrations of a quartz crystal, have a special lien on the value of *t*? (Bergson, in Moore, 1996, p. 61)

¹⁰⁶ “The flow of time of which we are aware at the level of individual consciousness, that flow which is misrepresented when we analyse it perforce into components, becomes the model for life itself” (Moore, 1996, p. 9). Note: Moore finds Bergson’s “attempt to create a sort of super-phenomenology for life itself, analogous to a phenomenology for an individual consciousness...dubious, though...he [Bergson] had some interesting arguments for it.” Moore links Bergson’s super-phenomenology with “the fashion for ‘panpsychism’” (p. 9).

The research protocol asked for an initial 15 minute meeting. The idea was to establish a connection, observe the MEP at work and then follow-up when I had actual incidents that we could investigate together. Some MEPs were on the clock with the appointments but most were relaxed, indicating that we could continue talking past the scheduled end time. I interpreted this as interest in the subject.

All conversations, interviews, readings, observations and participation in simultaneous interpretation by the researcher were done, as alertness and perception allowed, with duration and discursive consciousness in mind.

CHAPTER 3

INTERPRETING STUDIES AND THE TRANSMISSION MODEL

3.1 Conference and Community Simultaneous Interpretation

Professional practitioners of simultaneous interpretation (SI) have typically been divided into two camps: conference interpreters and community interpreters. Simultaneous interpreters for the European Parliament exemplify the conference interpreter who works in elite international settings such as academic conferences, political negotiations, and multinational corporations. Simultaneous interpreters for the Deaf (i.e., sign language interpreters) exemplify the community interpreter who works in the every day world of citizens, linguistic minorities, foreigners, and non-dominant language speakers as they access social services, acquire education and training, participate in workplaces as employees or managers, receive medical care, and navigate legal proceedings. Is the orientation to language similar or different in these two contexts of ‘conference’ and ‘community’? Do the differences or similarities distinguish simultaneous interpretation from translation? Just as Translation Studies has historically subsumed Interpreting Studies, conference interpreting has dominated community interpreting. The following analysis of a selected literature from Interpreting Studies deliberately spotlights community interpreters.

Ozolins & Hale state the first Critical Link conference in 1995 “served as an introduction to the international state of affairs” (2009, p. 1), implying that the present volume likewise represents the academic view of current conditions, thoughts, and concerns germane to the development of community interpreting at the global level. Given that the chapters in this (2009) volume overtly focus on themes of quality and shared responsibility, they provide an historical, situated snapshot of contemporary

academic discourse about “quality” and “responsibility” in SI. Implicit in the discourse are also attitudes about “sharing” which will be explored later.

3.2 State of the Research in Interpreting Studies

Community interpreting is one of many social fields of intercultural interaction in our time, an era characterized by contradictions of social comfort, transnational backlash, economic crisis, unprecedented technological advancement, paradigm multiplication, and the sixth mass extinction.¹⁰⁷ This snapshot in time is provided through a critical, deconstructionist-type of discourse analysis of contributions to the premier publication of community interpreting, the proceedings of the biennial, international Critical Link conferences. The volume chosen to contextualize community interpreting research and theory was published in 2009, containing papers presented at the 2007 conference in Sydney, Australia. This time period corresponds with the data collection from fieldwork undertaken at the European Parliament, which is elaborated in subsequent chapters. *Critical Link 5: Quality in Interpreting - A Shared Responsibility* (Hale, Ozolins & Stern, 2009) illustrates marginalization as an everyday characteristic of this field of labor. Despite tremendous growth in the scholarly study of community interpreting since the first Critical Link conference in

¹⁰⁷ The sixth mass extinction is sometimes being called the Holocene extinction. It is firmly established as anthropocentric, that is, human-caused. Conservative estimates anticipate the loss of half the biodiversity on earth in less than 80 years. More alarming estimates by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (May 13, 2013) involve drastic changes that threaten the continued existence of *homo sapiens*. Retrieved 5 April 2014, <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

1995, fifteen years later Ozolins & Hale report¹⁰⁸ “those who use interpreting services very rarely understand the complexities of the process or the role of the interpreter” (p. 3).

The contributions to *Critical Link 5: Quality in Interpreting - A Shared Responsibility* (henceforth, *CL5*) demonstrate that supporting and promoting community interpretation remains a tremendous social and democratic challenge. Even those countries that provided early models of well-institutionalized service provision, such as Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, are “still struggling with issues of status, quality of services and professionalism” (Ozolins & Hale, 2009, p. 1). This leads contributors González & Auzmendi to assert, “It is crucial that the authorities get involved in the development of this profession” (2009, p. 146). The “authorities” apparently means government officials and policy-makers, not necessarily *interpretee* participants whose own orientations to language greatly influence the ways simultaneous interpretation is performed. Whether the users of community SI understand SI as a particular kind of *intercultural* communication is not at all clear.

This timesnap of literature shows interpreter frustration with user confusion around exercising voice in this less-than-common communication situation. Voice is used here in the

¹⁰⁸ Rather than the customary academic protocol of disassociating authors from the ideas they propound, this critical discourse analysis of a representative sample of literature in the field of community interpreting foregrounds researchers’ voice(s) in the academic milieu. Representing knowledge is paradigmatic (e.g., Kuhn, 1962) and ideological (e.g., Hall, 1962; Kroskrity, 2000). “At moments of transition from one intellectual epoch to another, the strains within a given system of thought become unsupportable and need to be removed. When this happens, the absolute presumptions of the era are themselves called in question, and normal rational debate ceases to be possible. There are no longer agreed procedures for settling differences, or a shared vocabulary in which to discuss them” (Toulmin, 1972, p. 100). This absence of shared vocabulary under conditions of paradigm shift motivates the intervention of interpreters, and calls for the rapid skills development of interpretees in order to generate new procedures for settling differences.

technical, sociolinguistic sense: as a measure of effective communication, that is, communication that results in something close to what is sought (e.g., Blommaert, 2005). Users represented in the chapters of *CL5* include: the clerical assistant in Austrian asylum hearings who is responsible for recording the written record (Pöchhacker & Kolb, 2009); plaintiffs caught between Chinese legal translators and interpreters in Hong Kong's bilingual courts (Ng, 2009); members of the Australian judiciary (Roberts-Smith, 2009); Aboriginal families and community members (Cooke, 2009); healthcare providers in Italy accommodating English-speaking patients (Blignault, Stephanou & Barrett, 2009; Merlini & Favaron, 2009); biomedical researchers in Canada (Kaufert, Kaufert & LaBine, 2009), non-deaf "hearing" jurists in the presence of Australian sign language (Auslan) interpretation (as explored in a simulation by Napier, Spencer & Sabolcec, 2009); and a witness bursting into a special kind of song known as a *bertso* while giving legal testimony in Basque Country (González & Auzmendi, 2009). Although interpreting in the European Parliament is generally understood as "conference interpreting," Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) refer to themselves as representatives and participants in an over-arching "European *community*" (emphasis added).¹⁰⁹ As community-oriented interpretees, MEPs are also represented as users and participants in SI through the expressed concerns of conference interpreters for the European Parliament (Kent, 2009).

¹⁰⁹ Vuorikoski (2000): "Democracy is one of the primary values upheld by the EP rhetoric; a quantitative analysis revealed that 'democracy' appears in the EP speeches more frequently than in ordinary journalese (Wordsmith analysis against a million word corpus of UK journalistic texts). The concept of democracy also includes the idea of open markets... (p. 129); and "In their role of guardians of democracy the MEPs also act as spokespersons of the citizens" (p. 130); in sum, "...the EP rhetoric, which is based on the shared values of democracy, on an open market economy and the supremacy of the interests of the citizens/consumers" (p. 147). Overall, "*democracy* and *human rights* are two of the core values which are defended by MEPs" (emphasis in original, p. 187).

Table 1. Languages and Settings from One Volume of Research on Community Interpreting in 2009

Authors	Countries	Institution	Institutional Language	Community Languages
Ozolins & Hale	not country-specific	International conference & research literature	English	
Roberts-Smith	Australia	Legal – Criminal Trials	English	a language of Papua New Guinea, ^a a “native tongue” of Australia, Punjabi, Auslan, a Chinese language, Malayalam, Portuguese, Spanish, several Aboriginal languages. By inference an indigenous Canadian language, perhaps Greek and Japanese
Ng	China (Hong Kong)	Legal – Criminal Trials	English	Chinese, Cantonese, “other Chinese dialects,” Mandarin
Kent	European Union (European Parliament)	Government	Dutch ^b , English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, & Swedish	Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish
Garrett	Australia	Healthcare	English	Mentioned: “Chinese languages, Vietnamese, Arabic, Italian and Greek” but the specific languages of participants in the study are not named. ^c
Cooke	Australia (Northern Territory)	Aboriginal customary law	English	Djambarrpuynyu, “thirty or so Aboriginal languages,” “an Aboriginal pidgin.” By inference: Eora / Dharawal / Darug, and some Yolŋu Matha languages.
Napier, Spencer & Sabolcec	Australia	Legal – Jury Duty	English	Australian Sign Language (Auslan); mentions American Sign Language.
Pöschhacker & Kolb	Austria	Legal – Asylum Hearings	German	English. Levels of English fluency of study participants are not clear. English is the official language of Gambia and Zimbabwe. Participants from Nigeria may be more fluent in a Niger-Congo or Afroasiatic language.
González &	Basque Country	Legal – Court	<i>Batua</i> (unified, standard Basque)	Spanish and the six dialects of <i>Euskera</i> (the Basque languages):

Authors	Countries	Institution	Institutional Language	Community Languages
Auzmendi				Biscayan, Guipuzcoan, High Navarrese, Low Navarrese, Labourdin and Souletin.
Ortega Herráez, Abril Martí & Martin	Spain	Hospitals, social services, emergency & civil defense organizations, security forces & courts.	Spanish	English, French, Arabic, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Basque, Galician, Polish, Romanian, Berber, Catalan, Chinese, Czech, Greek, Dutch, Albanian, Bulgarian, Slovak, Japanese, Macedonian, Moldovian, Serbian-Croatian, Ukrainian, German, Lithuanian, Wolof, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi
Lee	Australia	Professional Interpreter Rating/ Assessment	English	Korean
Merlini & Favaron	Italy (Palermo, Sicily)	Healthcare	Italian	English
Tebble	Australia	Academic tradition of discourse studies	English	Greek, Italian, Spanish, Serbian, Cantonese, Mandarin, Khmer, Vietnamese
Blignault, Stephanou & Barrett	Australia (New South Wales)	Healthcare	English	Arabic, Cantonese, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Korean, Macedonian, Mandarin, Polish, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese
Kaufert, Kaufert & LaBine	Canada (Manitoba)	Medical Research – ethics of human subjects research	English	Cree, Afrikaans, Inuktitut, “eight... languages other than English, with a roughly even split between indigenous and other languages.” Mentioned: French, Spanish, Punjabi, Arabic

Source: Hale, S. B., Ozolins, D. U., & Stern, D. L. (2009). *The Critical Link 5: Quality in Interpreting- a shared responsibility*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

^a Few of the languages are named in the quotes or descriptions of this broad range of 35 court cases: an intriguing oversight for this chapter or a deliberate (institutionalized) legal maneuver?

^b In 2009 there were twenty-three official languages of the European Parliament. Listed here are the languages spoken by the sample of interpreters in this study.

^c Only some of the studies in this volume explicitly list the languages spoken by research subjects; some refer to nationality as a proxy, others identify languages in particular instances, which may or may not be inclusive of variation within the corpus.

3.2.1 Community Interpreting Studies: A Bracketed Sample

The 2009 volume, *CL5*, provides a reasonable sample of state-of-the-art research about simultaneous interpretation. A technique borrowed from philosophers (especially phenomenologists and deconstructionists) is to ‘put brackets around’ the object of study, hence creating a container to concentrate the analytical gaze. Bracketing off the *CL5* volume from the entire literature about SI is intended to provide a clear and coherent reference point for analysis and critique. The fifteen contributions to *CL5* compose a diverse range of reports on the status of SI in several countries (see Table 1), are based in different institutional domains, and involve various language combinations. The title of the volume shapes its scope, putting two dynamical configurations into tension, *quality* and *shared responsibility*.

3.3 Tebble’s 4-step Discourse Analysis Frame

Within the *CL5* timesnap of academic research on community interpreting, Tebble (2009) draws upon an interdisciplinary approach to discourse analysis, in order to argue that “skills in discourse analysis of spoken language are no longer the province just of scholars; they need to be part of the repertoire of the professional interpreter” (2009, p. 202). “By understanding the nature of the interpreted speech event,” she elaborates, “interpreters have a framework of the social context of their work” (p. 205). Tebble’s introduction to discourse analysis is both a contribution to, and a continuation of, academic meta-discourse (Diriker, 2004) about community simultaneous interpreting. Tebble’s overview is both broad and selective. She briefly outlines three approaches (conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, social semiotics) with a brief sketch

of their varied disciplinary origins before elaborating upon the social-semiotic approach to discourse analysis known as systemic functional linguistics.

Tebble (2009) presents four core prescriptions as lessons from functionalist discourse analysis. These lessons are borrowed in the following sections to organize and enable reflection upon the academic meta-discourse represented by the works in *CL5*:

- 1 Know where you are going.
- 2 Know where you are.
- 3 Interpret all feedback.
- 4 Ascertain the certainty of facts.

3.3.1 Applied Discourse Analysis 1: Where is the Field of Community SI Going?

Tebble explains: “If you understand the genre of the speech event...then you have a schema, a frame or structure for understanding where the [...interaction...] is going” (2009, p. 208). (This is the roadmap mentioned for the genre example on page 87: the standard argumentation structure for Members of the European Parliament.) The analytical move in this section is to raise the level of analysis from type of interpreted event to the academic meta-discourse about simultaneous interpreting. The answer to the question of the field’s development is implied by Ozolins & Hale in their introduction to *CL5* (2009). At the global scale, conditions for community interpreters are not improving, infrastructures for education, training, and certification are being created very slowly if at all, and attitudes toward the value of SI for society at large remain mixed and uncertain. One could conclude that community interpreting as a field of profession activity for communicative justice is going nowhere fast.

Yet, simultaneously, there are patterns of convergence in the research meta-discourse (e.g., Pöchhacker, 2007) that provide a toehold for “a concerted unified approach” (Ozolins & Hale, 2009, p. 3). This dissertation proposes that an impressive range of inequities and injustice at the level of language difference could be redressed through the strategic use of simultaneous interpretation as a strategy for creating linguistic fields of equality, in service of, for instance, the justice-based economic goals articulated by Amartya Sen (1992).

The organizing committee for the conference leading up to the publication of *CL5* knew that unified and concerted action does not and cannot happen by dint of the interpreter’s effort alone. The responsibility for generating communication that checks for mutual understanding is inherently a *social* responsibility that must be shared by all participants in the intercultural communication encounter. In order for practitioners and researchers in the field of simultaneous interpretation to elicit attention and active co-participation in the generation of meanings during processes of simultaneous interpretation, we need to identify and recognize our own contribution to the status quo of current conditions. On this basis, interpreters and interpretees can join with researchers and interpreter trainers to envision a mutually-agreeable destination and chart a course to reach there.

3.3.2 Applied Discourse Analysis 2: Where is Community SI Now?

Tebble titles this section of her summary on functional discourse analysis “Interpreting the signposts” (2009, p. 210). She explains, “Apart from knowing where you are going...everybody needs to know where they are at any one time” (p. 210). Tebble uses the metaphor of a journey: “having a schema in mind...is like knowing the route of a

journey...but actually negotiating the way can require the use of signposts” (p. 210).

Given typical patterns in the history of the development of disciplinary knowledge, the field of Interpreting Studies is perched on the verge of what become known as paradigm wars. The structuralist framework of Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics serves intellectual conservatism and is a natural fit for risk-averse professionals, interpreters and academics alike. However, moving to embrace an interactionist paradigm (also called an interpretivist paradigm)¹¹⁰ is a necessary step toward the diversification of perspectives that is crucial to the ongoing development of scientific knowledge (Kuhn, 1962).

The interpretivist paradigm is grounded by theories of language as a creative process whose use entails tangible outcomes of social construction: such as identities, relationships, and the many group dynamics that compose social reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966/1967). Given that community interpreters embody expertise with languages and intercultural communication, it is possible to imagine that, rather than engaging a paradigm shift as one of aggressive competition (i.e., an intellectual war), we might embrace a collaborative, exploratory dialogue toward more sharing of responsibility for defining and producing quality of participation during special intercultural events involving simultaneous interpretation.

¹¹⁰ The interpretive paradigm is described by sociologists Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan as “informed by a concern to understand the world as it is, to understand the fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective experience....It sees the social world as an emergent social process which is created by the individuals concerned” (1979, p. 28).

3.3.2.1 Lessons on How to Use an Interpreter: Re-Centering the Problematic of Simultaneous Interpretation

“Australians,” Roberts-Smith writes, “are generally completely unfamiliar with working with interpreters and have little understanding of what is involved” (2009, p. 34). Contrast this, however, with Cooke’s observation that “English-speaking Australians absorb this information [about the key characteristics and process of communicating using interpreters] through the mass media” (2009, p. 94). Ironically, both Roberts-Smith and Cooke are probably accurate. Participating in interpreted interaction is still an uncommon intercultural experience. Most people either do not have the personal experience that generates familiarity and understanding, or have experienced rigid, mechanical interactions that reinforce differences and lack of connection, thereby rendering comprehension difficult. Meanwhile, representations of SI in the mass media consistently reflect stereotypes and generalizations, perpetuating adverse discourse effects that tend to play out in problematic ways during real life encounters.

Interpreter frustration with interpretees is reflected throughout the *CL5* sample of contemporary interpreting research discourse.¹¹¹ González & Auzmendi (2009) put it explicitly, “The different parties involved (judges, prosecutors, lawyers and defendants) have no awareness of the role of interpreters” (p. 146). A more conservative statement might acknowledge that interpretees are *aware* of the interpreter, but their experiences and exposure to enacted interpreters’ role and responsibilities do not enable the pro-active

¹¹¹ Vuorikoski notes that European Parliament interpreters also talk about interpretees, but she only provides a single summary statement: “Interpreters frequently discuss the performances of the speakers that they have just interpreted, pointing out features that made interpreting difficult, or stating simply that someone had been ‘a good speaker’” (2004, p. 21).

responsiveness and engagement with the *intercultural* communication process that interpreters wish interpretees would embrace. Cooke argues “that ethical issues and dilemmas...may often be discussed and resolved if the quality of intercultural communication is high” (2009, p. 93), noting, in the instance of Australian-Aboriginal interpreted interaction, that “this presumes a level of cultural awareness and sensitivity on the part of police and lawyers that is not always present” (p. 92). Roberts-Smith puts the matter quite succinctly: “monocultural or Anglophone lawyers and judges often lack an understanding of the interpreting process and the work of interpreters” (2009, p. 13).

From an interactionist point-of-view, the dynamic result of monocultural monolingualism forces the interpreter into both error and *ad hoc* attempts at accommodation, such as reported in Spain by Ortega Herráez, Abril Martí & Martin (2009). “*Ad hoc* solutions are the order of the day and (inter)cultural mediation is given priority over interpreting (or translating, as it is usually mistakenly called) which is seen as being somehow narrowly literal and inadequate for community settings” (p. 150).

There are three tensions embedded in this single statement. One tension involves framing intercultural interaction as unusual or unfamiliar because it deviates from an unnamed but assumed norm for interacting. (Typically the unacknowledged norms are of the monoculture associated with the dominant language.) The second tension regards confusion about language use and the substantiality of differences between interpreting and translating. Third, the object of the communication process during interpreted interaction is torn between a limited, structuralist emphasis on information exchange via presumed pre-established discrete linguistic meanings versus the social aspects of identity and

relationship formation that accrue through collective repetition of the smallest rituals of interaction.¹¹²

Such tensions indicate a paradigmatic crossroads wherein scholars and professionals associated with the field of simultaneous interpretation can either maintain the structural linguistic precedent that seeks (as represented by Lee) “to apply the same standards across different language streams” (2009, p. 172) or creatively reconcile our representations of what interpreting is and what interpreting does in order to get at what interpreting can do. For instance, is interpreting about:

- “equivalence across *languages* and *cultures*” (emphasis added, Lee, 2009, p. 175; related to Ng’s *semantic mapping* between Chinese and English, emphasis added, 2009);
- “the sense consistency between the source *text* and the target *text*” (emphasis added, Lee, 2009, p. 171);
- “the process which *the language* has to go through” (emphasis added, González and Auzmendi, 2009, p. 137);
- “*effective communication* between parties who do not speak the same language” (emphasis added, Ng 2009, p. 50);
- “to ensure that the witness can *access* the question being asked...*and* that all personnel in the courtroom can *understand* the account” (emphasis added, Napier, Spencer & Sabolcec, 2009, p. 100);
- “the ethical issues and dilemmas *facing the interpreter*” (emphasis added, Cooke, 2009, p. 93);
- the “*linguistic barriers* that deaf people face” (emphasis added, Napier et al., 2009, p. 102);
- the achievement of “the *same effect* on the target language listener as on the source language listener” (emphasis added, Lee, 2009, p. 175).

¹¹² Structuralism is also known by the labels functionalism and positivism, cf. Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

The emphasis added to the selected statements illustrates that interpreting research has constructed its object more in terms of (roughly) externalized artefacts of communication (such as texts, languages and words with supposedly fixed meanings) than in terms of less tangible outcomes of communication (relationships, identities, inequalities and so on). The former construction constitutes the logic of difference as a barrier. The diversity of these representations suggest paradigm conflict between structuralist and interactionist modes of analysis.

Paradigm conflict is illustrated by the array of quotes showing a) the dominance of the structural linguistic frame, which emphasizes language, as opposed to the social interaction frame, which emphasizes people, and b) the centering of the interpreter (usually in isolation from interpretees) as the fixed location for all troubles. Together, the isolation of the interpreter and the emphasis on language combine to structure interpreted interaction as a homogenous professional activity. As a result, attention is deflected from attending to the communication *differences* that interpreted interaction necessarily entails. Interpretees are disenfranchised from the complex dynamism of intercultural communication and interpreters are, by and large, prevented from drawing them in to do something it.

3.3.2.2 Three Discursive Tensions

The contributions to CL5 explore conditions of simultaneous interpretation across a range of institutional settings in a number of countries and involve an extensive array of language combinations. (Review Table 1.) Reading across each scene, with attention to how authors represent and discuss the findings of their research, some dialogic tensions become apparent. One tension is between so-called unusual or atypical dynamics of SI

and a taken-for-granted notion of what interpreted interaction ‘should’ feel like. A second tension involves the stress of interpretee ignorance about using interpreters, which seems to be a direct outcome of maintaining the twin myths of interpreter neutrality (Metzger, 1995, 1999) and interpreter invisibility (Roy, 1989, 1993, 2000), both of which contribute to interpretee perceptions of interpreter opaqueness (Angelelli, 2001, p. 11; 2003). The operation of these myths are apparent across the diverse range of settings and regardless of language combinations, with some variability among institutional scenes. The tension of interpretees’ acceptance of these myths about the interpreter’s role enables a third tension to come into view.

The third tension regards language itself. Specifically the different orientations and understandings that people from any of these groupings (interpretees, interpreters, interpreting researchers, even bystanders and non-participants) have about what language is and what language can do, that is, language ideologies. The following, continuing critical deconstruction of this timesnap of published research on community interpreting shows a paradigmatic contest between traditional structuralism (mainly linguistics) and creative interactionism. Structural linguistics in particular organizes knowledge through reduction (usually to ‘words’ or morphological units, sometimes to ‘meanings’ which are presented as if fixed and unchanging), while the lens of creative interactionism is premised in the on-going necessity of meaningfulness as a constantly-evolving and persistently-dynamic feature of social interaction.

3.3.2.2.1 Tension 1: An Unnamed, Assumed Standard

Half of the authors (8/15) make a uniqueness claim about their study that only makes sense in contrast with some presumed normative type of community interpreting.

These generally appear in authors' claims about certain characteristics or features respective to their research sites. For instance, Ng (2009) claims a deviation from "the usual case" because court interpreting services in Hong Kong "have long been provided for the linguistic majority [Chinese], instead of for the linguistic minority [English]" (p. 39). Napier et al.'s (2009) experiment to test the communicative efficacy of simultaneous interpretation for potential Deaf jurors in Australia pits minority language users against the assumptions of majority language speakers. Comprehension rates were equivalent between mock 'jurors' communicating only in English and mock 'jurors' communicating via English/Auslan¹¹³ interpretation, demonstrating that interpreting between two languages is as effective for understanding as communicating in only one language.

In a different kind of legal setting, Pöchhacker and Kolb (2009) make special note of discovering interpreters in asylum hearings working in a team-like way based on their awareness of the future consequences of documented statements. Likewise, Merlini & Favaron (2009) investigate the "highly specific context of peer-to-peer communication [between Italian and US nurses] in an institution where interpreters interrelate daily with their clients, and where they feel and are perceived by the healthcare staff as part of a team" (pp. 188-189). Blignault, Stephanou & Barrett (2009) highlight the importance of interpreters "being a valued member of the health care team" (p. 221). This special emphasis on considering the interpreter as a team-member or co-participant in the interpretation process brings into view a norm that does not typically acknowledge the interpreter's presence.

¹¹³ Australian Sign Language.

González & Auzmendi (2009) highlight “the nature of the Basque language” (p. 135) and “the delicate political situation [of Basque Country and Spain]” (p. 135) as generating “truly arduous” (p. 135) conditions for Spanish-Basque interpreters that are “truly complex” (p. 135) and must be “endured” (p. 146). They emphasize the “highly unusual situation rarely found elsewhere” (p. 145) of interpretees who are actually fluent in both languages and are exercising their right of choice regarding which language to use. Meanwhile Cooke (2009) proposes “the bar is perhaps set higher for legal interpretations by Aboriginal communities than by the mainstream agencies who use them” (p. 89), and Kaufert, Kaufert & LaBine (2009) compare and contrast ethical practice at another intriguing juncture: that between medical researchers and the interpreters who work for medical research teams in the field. Noting a distinction between the goal of doctor-patient healthcare (which is, interpreted or not, the patient’s health), and the goal of research (which is knowledge), Kaufert et al comment upon a study of researcher experience in developing countries (Dawson & Kass, 2005) where the majority of researchers had not learned the language of their subjects and thus necessarily “would have used interpreters. Yet there is no mention of interpreters in the paper or their contributions as language mediators” (p. 245).¹¹⁴

All of these claims to distinctiveness suggest that diversity and variation are actually the norm for community-based simultaneous interpretation rather than the exception. This begs the question of what hypothetical norm is being imagined by these researchers as the basis for comparison and contrast? The standard that comes into view

¹¹⁴ Hidden or “invisible translation” is a theme of the international management literature (Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio, 2011; Piekkari & Tietze, 2008,) and also part of the structure of controlled multilingualism in the European Parliament.

seems to require operating as if the interpreter is not present in the communication process, despite the varying dynamics of interpreting (such as the directionality of interpreting, with reference to the majority or minority status of the language) and the language profile of interpretees (monolingual or fluent in two or more of the languages in use). Since the interpreter is not acknowledged as a crucial part of the communication process, their mediation of these dynamics is not represented. This absence generates a norm of silence, keeping interpreters *as if* invisible and certain kinds of talk about interpreting taboo.

3.3.2.2.2 Tension 2: Adverse Effects of Interpreter Invisibility

This brings us to the second tension evident in a critical reading of the discourse in *CL5*, that of perceptions of interpretee ignorance of how to use interpreters. There is no discursive evidence of recognition that user incompetence or ignorance occurs as an effect of (traditional) interpreter insistence on the invisibility of role. In reviewing a trial¹¹⁵ nullified on an appeal that the defendant was spoken to in “a language she did not understand,” Australian Justice Roberts-Smith (2009) quotes the findings of the English Court of Appeal in which they criticize the solicitor and counsel: “Not once does it appear to have occurred to either of them to question the interpreter so as to ascertain whether or not he was understanding what the appellant said to him and whether, he, the interpreter, had the impression that she was not comprehending the language he was talking to her” (p. 19).

¹¹⁵ Begum (1991) 93 Cr App Rep 96.

Setting aside the ethical implications of that interpreter's non-professional performance,¹¹⁶ 'to question the interpreter' is not a behavior encouraged by the profession. How does one pose inquiries to someone who is supposed to be invisible? This is an example of how the interpreter is actually "opaque" (Angelelli, 2003, p. 16 cited by Ortega Herráez et al, 2009, p. 152). It is not much of a stretch to comprehend the desired effect of professional accreditation processes and codes of conduct for interpreters' professionalism as having an adverse effect on interpretees. As a remedy, Roberts-Smith, for instance, wants "guaranteed competencies" (2009, p. 33), for interpreters, without mention of baseline skills needed by interpretees.

In their exposition of the results of using the term "norm" for desired professional behaviors instead of "rule" in healthcare interpreter training, Merlini & Favaron (2009) draw upon a few sources to suggest interpreters must oppose "the linearity of habit" (p. 199, quoting Danou, 2007, p. 50) which keeps interpreters (supposedly) invisible. Note Merlini & Favaron's cautionary caveat: they acknowledge that such a contrary stance "may be too daring a proposition in our field, where non-professional practice is still all too frequent" (p. 199). Whether taken as a rule or a norm, interpreter invisibility is not only idealized within codes of professional conduct but is often actually celebrated. It is the context of accustomed invisibility, for instance, that explains how Pöchhacker & Kolb (2009) did not anticipate how "forcefully" (p. 123) the written record of oral asylum

¹¹⁶ The "fake interpreter" fiasco at Nelson Mandela's Memorial Service in 2014 is hardly an isolated issue; just higher profile. Uncredentialed and unqualified interpreters illustrate a general disregard for intercultural communication by Hearing (non-deaf/non-signing) interpretees as well as interpreters. The acceptance of incompetent job performances is a particular instance of audism (the systematic oppression of Deaf people).

hearings in Austria emerged as a significant indicator of the interpreter's presence and performance in the interpreted communicative interaction.¹¹⁷

Pöchhacker & Kolb (2009) discovered that co-production of the documentation of an asylum hearing elicits a “significant degree of shared responsibility on the interpreter’s part for the legally relevant manifestation of the interview” (p. 119). They describe in detail what might be considered a reversal of “established principles...whereby the interpreter essentially renders what was said rather than what is to be written” (p. 133), resulting in cooperative behaviors “by all participants, with the interpreter assuming a role and responsibility far beyond normative precepts” (p. 120). In this variation of role, the interpreter envisions the purposes the written record will be put to later, and crafts the target language interpretations with such future use in mind. In other words, the interpreter accepts some responsibility for ensuring that the voice (i.e., the intended/desired effects) of the asylum seeker carries forward into the next levels of bureaucracy and administration.

The actions engaged by the interpreter indicate what Pöchhacker & Kolb (2009) call a “collaborative relationship, or mutual co-orientation” (p. 127) marked by “a verbal alliance” (p. 128). The alliance involves the interpreter “adopt[ing] the interviewer’s perspective” (p. 128) and “ask[ing]...follow up questions” (p. 128). Specific behaviors include pausing for the person writing or typing to catch up with the interpretation (p. 126), “dictating punctuation marks” (p. 125), and apologizing when “repair[ing] a clause

¹¹⁷ “Though not explicitly included in the original design of our research project, the role of the written record emerged so forcefully from our observations that it became a crucial point of interest, alongside and as part of such fundamental topics as role boundaries, neutrality and fidelity” (Pöchhacker & Kolb, 2009, p. 123).

that ... has already been uttered” (p. 128) because it may require typing corrections (p. 128). Reciprocally, the interpreter is open to being reminded by the recorder “of the last words before [an] interruption” (p. 127). One upshot of sharing responsibility for the accuracy of the record named by Pöchhacker & Kolb is “a more actively involved and less invisible interpreter” (p. 134).

It seems, at least on the basis of this specific *CL5* corpus, that future-oriented behavior by the interpreter is likely to lead to shared responsibility among and with interpretees. Such multidimensionality beyond the assumed, taken-as-normal limitations of the interpreter’s contribution to the quality of communication is particularly evident in Aboriginal and First Nations communities. According to Kaufert et al. (2009), “There is a tradition of interpreters playing pivotal leadership roles in small remote Northern communities” (p. 247). Along similar lines, an Aboriginal interpreter describes a process conducted by her nation’s elders that could be considered the community’s counterpart to mainstream professional accreditation: “The old people felt I had to be put through a ceremony to receive my shield, my coolamon, with my story and the poison story as well: the story that gives me real authority to be able to speak” (Cooke, 2009, p. 89). Respect for the intercultural communication process is built in this indigenous way in parallel with professional credentialing from mainstream society.

Such reciprocal authorization among interpretees to empower the interpreter is also exhibited within the peer-to-peer healthcare team in Italy. Incidents occur which “foreground the interpreter as an interlocutor in his [or her] own right” (Merlini & Favaron, 2009, p. 194), and the nature of observed teamwork is such that, in one instance, “the interpreter explicitly helps the parties settle [a] disagreement” (p. 195). That

particular facilitation was accomplished by a shift from direct to indirect speech, which the interpreter explained “as a deliberate attempt to step into the interaction in order to solve the deadlock” (p. 196). This creative use of interaction to stimulate a shared, positive outcome for participants in interpreted communication may be an application of the kind of intuitive agency that is negatively valued by structuralist ideology (i.e., the unquestioned reliance on linguistics and meaning’s location in the source language) because it makes the creative effects of interpreter agency (such as the selection of diction, the management of turn-taking, or the assertion of interpreter wisdom) so obvious. In other words, if allowing the interpreter to shift their footing (Goffman, 1982) is all the maneuvering required to solve a communication problem, then it should become evident that resistance to the interpreter making such shifts can perpetuate problems.

The satisfaction for shared responsibility within these situations where the interpreter has decision latitude (Lee & Llewellyn-Jones, 2011) is in stark contrast with the frustration of interpretees such as Roberts-Smith, who are constrained by the formalities of maintaining the myth of interpreter invisibility and its accompanying assumption of neutrality.

3.3.2.2.3 Tension 3: Diverse Conceptions of Language

This brings us to the third tension, the orientation to language itself, to language as such (Benjamin, 1916/1969). Ideologies of language in the context of simultaneous interpretation effect the social interaction of the interpreted event, the range of possible meaning(s) for utterances delivered during the event, and the likelihood of understanding or misunderstanding on the part of some or all participants. Kaufert et al.(2009) provide an intriguing juxtaposition of two different perspectives on language:

The assumption underlying that two people speaking the same language should roughly agree on translation is relatively fundamental to interpreting and also the assumption underlying the use of back-translation. However, the people we interviewed who were working with Aboriginal languages had a different perspective and talked about language as a constantly changing entity as new words come in, such as the translation of HIV/AIDS into Cree, and old words were lost. (2009, p. 242)

There are a couple of different dynamics represented in this statement, one dealing with historical change through language contact and the other revealing a kind of immediacy need for shared comprehension so as to enable continuation of a communication process. The point about agreement hides, somewhat, an assumption that the recognition of agreement is presumed or idealized as being automatic. This is because the ‘rough agreements’ rely on an established stability of meaning that speakers of the same language are expected to share. The fact that interpretees usually do share some stability of definitions should not overshadow the ever-present possibility of misunderstanding based upon different uses of terms and/or unfamiliarity with particular terms.

Contrast the desirable instantaneity of automatic recognition with the interpreter who told Kaufert et al. (2009) about “the need for patience in finding the ‘right’ word in the sense of being the word that was understood” (p. 243). This is a fundamentally different orientation to language and the attribution of meaning because it a) shifts the location of definition from the sender of a communicative act or utterance to the receiver(s), and b) privileges the human experience over the linguistic artifact. This is a paradigmatic re-framing which allows, for example, another way of understanding the tension Ng exposes between “adequacy” and “acceptability” in Hong Kong legal translation and interpretation (2009).

Ng describes the adequacy criterion in terms of a “semantic mapping between the English and the Chinese texts” (2009, p. 41), while the acceptability criterion refers to what is sensible to the average (non-legally trained) Chinese individual in court (p. 40-41). The adequacy criterion is premised upon the structuralist assumption that interpreters interpret between languages (things) rather than for people (beings), and that the languages of English and Chinese are essentially composed of interchangeable and corresponding parts. This is patently not the case, and Ng documents systemic maneuvering within the legal infrastructure to account for instances of “semantic incongruence” (p. 48). This is necessary because adequacy satisfies a rule, while acceptability satisfies people.

The possibility of controlling the communication process seems to be re-assuring to interpretees who are put off by the need to accommodating language difference. Ortega Herráez et al.(2009) describe the situation in Spain, which they tell us “receives more immigrants than any other country in the EU and is one of the world’s major tourist destinations” (p. 150). Their study across sectors (hospitals and social services, emergency, civil defence, security and the courts) finds “the majority [of community interpreters] apparently go beyond the functions that would usually be attributed to community interpreters in countries where this activity has become consolidated as a profession” (p. 162). Ortega Herráez et al. are supporting more professionalization, with its prescribed restrictions on the functionality of the interpreter’s role. For instance:

Court and police interpreters would seem to have a narrower, more limited view of their role, and are subject to certain constraints...the situation is more controlled by the service provider and perceived as more formal. (Ortega Herráez et al., 2009, p. 162-163)

However, looking across the discourse in *CL5*, there appears to be evidence of more desirable outcomes of interpreted interaction under conditions of less or reduced control than in those situations where the interpreter's range of decision latitude (Lee & Llewellyn-Jones, 2011) is constrained. Ortega Herráez et al (2009) are likely more interested in a kind of middle-ground that brings the untrained community interpreter into the professional community, but perhaps without having to adopt overstrict restrictions on role that constrain effective intercultural communication. Research in healthcare (mainly US-based) has found that

Professional interpreters have been linked with increased patient satisfaction, greater patient involvement, improved understanding, greater compliance with treatment, improved access, and reduced medical errors (Brach and Fraser, 2000; Timmins, 2002; Jacobs et al., 2001; Flores et al., 2003; Baker et al., 1996, Flores et al., 2005). (Garrett, 2009, p. 73)

Evidence of positive gains from interpreted communication in the medical field is contrasted with Roberts-Smith's negative assessment of court interpreting:

"The continuing perception amongst many, if not most, Judges and lawyers is that interpreters are actually an obstacle to communication. Some of these perceptions are due to a lack of appreciation of linguistic or cultural differences or what the process of interpretation entails. Unfortunately, many are also the product of practical experience." (2009, p. 29)

In the legal field, what is emphasized are the "consequences of communication failure" (Roberts-Smith, 2009, p. 29) rather than, as in healthcare, the positive effects of intercultural, interpreted communication success. This is a classic terministic screen (Burke, 1966).

The emphasis on failure overrides the recognition of success, making it seem as if interpreted interaction is always fraught and interpreters are always suspect. Instead, a

more realistic assessment would recognize that interpreting is probably no more or less prone to misunderstandings than communicating in one language, as Napier et al.'s mock juror experiment demonstrated (2009). Interpretees simply need to learn the skills of falsification, especially when an interpretation deviates from reasonable expectation, and take steps to remedy or co-construct shared understanding, just as with any communicative repair, by asking questions and paraphrasing to ensure mutual comprehension.

3.3.2.3 Failure of the Monolingual Illusion

A fascinating result of Napier et al.'s experiment comparing interpreted information with non-interpreted information was "that both the deaf and hearing 'jurors' in this study *equally misunderstood* some terms and concepts" (emphasis added, 2000, p. 113). With all the insistence that "the interpreter must not 'clean up' the evidence by giving it a form, a grammar or syntax that it does not have" (Roberts-Smith, quoting Canadian Chief Justice Lamer who was himself quoting another source,¹¹⁸ one must wonder at the implication that communicating in the same language guarantees either understanding or truthfulness, let alone accuracy and precision of intended meaning. In fact, despite insisting (for instance) upon interpreter use of the first person, it turns out that interpretees are not fooled by the illusion: they may actually be detrimentally constrained by it. Merlini & Favaron (2009) trace the rationale of interpreters using first person to a combination of being "frequently echoed in the literature" (p. 189) and having

¹¹⁸ Steele, "Court Interpreters in Canadian Criminal Law" in RvTRan [1994] 2 SCR 951), Roberts-Smith 2009: p. 23

“advantages; over and above enhancing clarity, brevity, and impartiality, [specifically] it is thought to create ‘the illusion of a direct exchange between the monolingual parties’ (Wadensjö, 1997, p. 49)” (p. 189)

While this corpus of research on community interpreting generates evidence case many (if not most) interpretees do not know how to work with interpreters, it may also be that interpretees are working with interpreters the best they can under the conditions that the profession of interpreting has itself imposed. Legal discourse has explicitly adopted both the invisibility imperative and the structural linguistic logic about language. Revisiting the jurisprudential basis for the presence of a court interpreter, Roberts-Smith gave us the image of a “cipher” which, by definition, is a “zero, one that has no weight, worth or influence” (Merriam Webster Free Online Dictionary), i.e., the interpreter is to have no substance. However, the interpreter’s task is to transform the non-communicative status of those speaking a language different than officials of the court to the communicative position of having voice in the language of the court. Assertions that represent the interpreter’s contribution as non-existent do not foster proactivity regarding working with interpreters.

For instance, Roberts-Smith (2009) paraphrases Her Honour presiding over the case of *Perera v Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs*: “The function of the interpreter is to convey in English what has been said in another language, and vice-versa, so as to place the non-English speaker as nearly as possible in the same position as the English speaker” (p. 25). What position is this? “The position in which he or she would be if those defects did not exist” (Roberts-Smith, p.17); with defects specified as “for want of some physical capacity or for lack of knowledge of the language of the

court” (p. 17). The language of the court is explicitly privileged and deviations from its standard deliberately demoted: there is no give-and-take recognition of the mutual value or inherent equality of different languages.

Continuing interpreter practices and interpreting researcher complicity with this mal-alignment of non-presence with the de-valuing of difference interferes with the interpretees’ abilities to conduct communicative repair. To make a repair is to “say ‘no’ to an expression...its motive is intelligibility” (Bolinger, 1953/1965, p. 248 in Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977, p. 361). Speakers routinely self-correct and occasionally make corrections to others’ speech (Schegloff et al.) By defining out clarifications and other interactions with interpreters that can be construed as interruptions to a monolingual flow, interpreters are not only invisible, they become unaccountable, too. Eliciting feedback and monitoring from interpretees, however, does suggest the possibility for co-creating a way out of the invisibility-unaccountability cycle. Judges and lawyers have not lost sight of the interpreter’s presence in case law, even if they prefer not to accommodate interpreters in court. They are aware that permitting an interpreter “adds another dimension to the Court’s task” (Roberts-Smith, p. 22) by virtue of the interpreter being “transposed between” the tribunal and the witness (p. 15).

However, the discursive focus *on the interpreter* still hides¹¹⁹ what it is that the interpreter’s presence ought to be bringing more clearly into view: shared responsibility is most crucial at exactly those moments of intercultural, multilingual communication when the language difference is most keen. Rather than expecting the interpreter alone to overcome intercultural differences made manifest in language difference, communicating

¹¹⁹ Through the terministic screen process of de-selection (Burke, 1966).

effectively is a shared activity that requires careful attention from all interpretees if mutual understanding is to be achieved. This is not a task to be accomplished invisibly by an individual or even a team of professional interpreters. It is the interpretees who can judge what it is they want or need to understand, and the interpretees who have the ability to say ‘no’ and offer a repair to their own or another’s talk. “Self-correction and other-correction are related organizationally” (Schegloff et al., 1977, p. 362). The organization of repair bears on interpreted communication at least as much as it does on non-interpreted, single language communication.

The moment for quality intervention in interpreted interaction in order to share responsibility is identified by Her Honour in *Perera*, when she “pointed out that interpretation is not a mere mechanical exercise, but one which involves both technical skill and expert judgment....perfect interpretation may be impossible – no matter how accurate the interpretation is, the words, style, syntax or emotion are not those of the witness and some words are culturally specific and incapable of being interpreted” (paraphrased by Roberts-Smith, pp. 25-26). This interpretee knowledge is amplified by “all members of the court” (p. 27) in *De La Espriella-Velasco v The Queen*—who “accepted that forensic interpretation, especially in court proceedings, is a complex and sophisticated process” (p. 27). Specifically:

The interpreter must express, in the target language, as accurately as that language and the circumstances permit, the idea or concept as it has been expressed in the source language. The individual aspects of this expression of what is required, are important. The reference to the ‘idea or concept’ being expressed acknowledges that the process of interpretation is not merely the substitution of a word in one language for an equivalent word in the other and that there is often a lack of semantic equivalence. That, and social or cultural differences may mean that even the ‘idea or concept’ itself has no equivalent in both societies. (p. 27)

Acknowledging the possibility of no equivalent contradicts the criterion of accuracy, calling for another measure.

Indeed, to avert the outcome documented by Ng, that “...the meticulous efforts on the part of the legal translator to attain semantic mapping do not always seem to pay off” (2009, p. 50), what is needed is a real time combination of interpretee awareness of the need to act communicatively into these moments and interpreter openness to sharing the mediation of intercultural, multilingual differences with these engaged interpretees (rather than holding our expertise inaccessibly behind the imposed veil of invisibility). Even though interpreters express frustration with interpretees, interpreter resistance to sharing is also evident, although it may not be conscious. Recommendations made by contributing authors to *CL5* locate specific remedies for improving interpreted communication in increased or improved performance *by the interpreter*, often specifying within the field of interpreter training.

Such thinking is a discourse pattern following linear structuralist rules rather than breaking open a co-creative, cooperative effort of truly sharing responsibility for meaning-making with interpretees. Paradigmatic shift requires coordination among and across all the institutions who need effective interpreting, not just a change in one field of interpreter education and training. The comprehension and meaning-making needs of institutions using interpreters are significant, although perhaps in different ways than the needs of the individuals who must persist (with varying degrees of courage and character) to communicate in another language.

An interesting feature of interpretee criticism of interpreters is a kind of projection that they, themselves (as interpretees) speak plainly and clearly within a rational or

logical rhetorical framework that listeners, watchers (if using a signed language) and interpreters automatically understand. In fact, Napier et al. cite Judith Levi's (1993) assessment of the US State of Illinois' jury instructions (written in English for native English speakers), in which Levi identifies several problems, such as "incohesive discourse organization, that is, confusing sequences of points, discontinuity, and needless interruptions to the flow with unrelated information" (2009, p. 104) among other equally disturbing features of the monolingual legal monologue. In the mock trial with deaf and non-deaf 'jurors' using English-Auslan simultaneous interpretation, Napier, et al. report:

The results of the comprehension test show that both hearing and deaf 'jurors' misunderstood some concepts. In relation to the closed/multiple-choice questions, approximately 10.5% of the questions were answered incorrectly by all participants. Of the open-ended questions, some responses were problematic from both deaf and hearing participants. (2009, p. 107)

Not only are the error/misunderstanding percentages comparable, but in at least one instance, Deaf 'jurors' relying on interpreters did better than the control group of hearing counterparts (p. 111). Napier et al. conclude, "The material was...challenging as hearing 'jurors' misunderstood some aspects of the summation *even though they were receiving the information directly in English*" (emphasis added, p. 114).

The proper target of critiquing communication breakdowns in interpreted interaction involves the complicity of interpretees in allowing noticeable glitches to pass by without remark. This includes ascertaining comprehension rather than simply assuming that the interpreter has magically fixed all difficulties. Garrett, for instance, notes: "No one [in Australian hospitals] is required to ask, [or] document the important question: 'How well do you speak English?'" (p. 75). This institutional-level failing to imagine other ways of communicating is complemented on the patient side with a "theme

of powerlessness” (p. 76) and “an emergent construct” which Garrett and her colleagues labeled ‘The Happy Migrant Effect,’ i.e., “patients discounted and minimized the significance of [very negative] events” (p. 76). Some identified motivators of ‘The Happy Migrant Effect’ include positive assertions of new country patriotism and appreciation for comparatively better services than was available in their country of origin, however these impulses serve to feed generalized Australian English monolingualism, excusing inadequate simultaneous interpreting, and even justifying its absence.

This critical reading of the meta-discourse in *CL5* is posed as representative and characteristic of normative biases that interpreted interaction is not natural and should be measured by the standards of same language communication. Evidence of this hegemonic relationship is provided by the three tensions.¹²⁰ First, according to accounts from interpreters, these researchers report that interpretees do not know how to use interpreters. That is, there is a perceived lack of practical knowledge about how to communicate when different languages are involved. Second, this perceived lack of knowledge is blamed on the interpretees but remedies are aimed at providers: interpreters and interpreter-educators. This indicates difficulties with interpreting the discourse’s signposts!

Tebble (2009) introduces the difference between a framing move and a focusing move, arguing, “framing moves ... make a major contribution to the coherence of the

¹²⁰ The attitude that speaking (together) in the same language is better, natural, and more normal than speaking (together) using different languages is an example of hegemony, as defined by Gramsci (1971).

discourse” (p. 211).¹²¹ In discussing the example she provides, Tebble suggests that interpreters might drop framing moves in favour of focusing moves because focusing moves have “obvious content” (p. 210) while framing moves are discourse markers that “signal the next stage” or “can be signposts to new topics” (p. 211). She also suggests reasons why interpreters justify dropping framing moves, such as an assumption that interpretee can figure it out on their own or a belief that “there is no equivalent expression” (p. 211). What is missing from the academic research about community interpreting is acknowledgment of the frame: a frame that established invisibility as a feature of professional practice. Complaining about invisibility while persisting in a discourse that excludes interpretees serves to reinforce invisibility.

Which brings us to the third tension, involving language ideologies. Some of the confusion about what language is and what language does is represented in Tebble’s (2009) rehash of the common interpreter lament of ‘no equivalent expression.’ Sometimes it is not “the expression” per se that needs to be interpreted but the move that expression is meant to signal. Every culture has a way to indicate a new topic or a new stage in an interaction. The challenges of intercultural communication stem less from lack of equivalent concepts than from different senses of propriety, timing and protocols. All interpreting discourse that emphasizes the importance of words undermines the stewardship of interpretees’ identities and cultural ways of being. This is the arena where interpretees must engage with interpreters for interpreted communication to truly generate shared meanings and good relations.

¹²¹ Tebble’s source for defining framing and focusing moves is Sinclair & Coulthard, (1975).

3.3.3 Applied Discourse Analysis 3: Interpret All Feedback—Including Input from Interpretees

Cooperation among interpretees and interpreters is most necessary regarding backchannel feedback. Tebble's (2009) example continues with the way systemic functional linguistics privileges "the feedback that can and should be interpreted is that given during a turn at talk when only one person is speaking" (p. 211). On the one hand, this seems almost too obvious to even state; that is, until one considers the many instances when full interpretation of each interpretee's turn at talk does not occur. So, on the surface there is actually already quite a large problem. Also problematic, perhaps even more so, is slippage allowed with backchannel feedback:

The most difficult feedback to interpret would be the [in this case] physician's auditor back channel feedback made while the interpreter is in process of relaying what the patient has just said; or made by the patient while the interpreter is in the process of relaying what the physician has just said. Such interpreting can be achieved with varying degrees of success. (p. 211)

As a description, this is a true statement of the relative difficulty of interpreting every interpretee's backchannel communications on par with each interpretee's turns at talk. Understood from the perspective of meta-discursive framing, that is, as a signpost for people trying to understand where they are in any process of interpreted communication, Tebble could be read either as advocating partial success or excusing partial failure. The conditions of interpreting that inhibit utterances occurring in two directions at the same time *both being interpreted* are worthy of more attention and investigation.

Writing about the experience of one set of users of interpreting services in the Australian healthcare system, Garrett reports that she and her colleagues created "an emergent construct" for interactions that were interpreted based upon a "theme of

powerlessness [that] appeared central to many patient experiences” (2009, p. 76).

Concerns by users of legal interpreting services in Basque Country “doubt the efficiency of the interpreting services” enough that they essentially collude with authorities to cut the interpreter out of interactions, “relegating the role of the interpreter to insignificance” (González and Auzmendi, 2009, p. 139). These two situations are different in that the users have different language profiles: in Basque Country, most are bilingual and thus exercise a choice to use interpreters, whereas the patients in Australian emergency rooms and hospitals must rely upon family, friends, and bilingual staff to facilitate communication when interpreters are not provided.

One could argue that the two cases are incommensurate: one is in healthcare the other in the justice system. The former refers to a situation in which professional SI is not provided; while the latter refers to a situation in which professional SI is provided but not used. At the meta-discourse level, however, it is not the difference in power/powerlessness that matters most between Basque Country bilinguals in court and immigrants seeking healthcare in Australia but rather the similarity between them: interpretees in both situations apparently often feel the communication situation is out of their control. Roberts-Smith (2009) reports that judges’ and lawyers practical experience of inadequate, absent, or unprofessional SI, and also “because the process of interpretation has not been understood” (p. 29) has led many in Australia’s court system to consider interpreters “an obstacle to communication” (p. 29). Official disappointment often finds a target in the interpreter rather than in the organization, delivery or enactment of interpreting services.

While none of the *CL5* cases or studies alone characterizes the entire user experience of community interpreting, taken together they represent user disenfranchisement with community SI. Only in two instances (in the *CL5* corpus) do we find substantial evidence of a positive effect from the intercultural communication practice of SI. First, in the case of the Deaf ‘mock jurists’ in Napier, et al’s simulation that found “levels of comprehension between deaf and hearing participants were similar” (2009, p. 99). Second, in Merlini & Favaron’s (2009) report on positive outcomes in healthcare interpreter training by a linguistic decision to refer to “norms” instead of “rules” to guide interpreter decision-making while interpreting (p. 198). Given the ratio of only two studies with positive outcomes to eleven or twelve with negative reports in the *CL5* corpus, one might determine that simultaneous interpretation is a failed enterprise. Critical discourse analysis, however, suggests that an alternative framing is possible.

Instead of reading the academic literature as an exclusively objective reflection of reality (which is the functionalist approach), we can interpret the meta-discourse as an extension of a certain and peculiar set of prejudices and biases. As illustrated above, discourses about interpreting document prejudice against interpreted communication and bias in support of non-interpreted communication. By embracing attitudes about language and communication from the field without questioning where the attitudes come from and whom they serve, interpreting researchers replicate and perpetuate popular misunderstandings about simultaneous interpretation.

3.3.4 Applied Discourse Analysis 4: Ascertaining the Certainty of Facts

The example provided by Tebble (2009) to illustrate the application of functional discourse analysis is a medical encounter between a physician and a patient. She draws upon the components of Hymes (1964, 1972) model of the speech event and a previously-derived generic structure of interpreted medical consultation (Tebble, 1999). Tebble explains that this structure was empirically established by combining a top down approach (Halliday & Hasan; 1985; Hasan, 1977) and a micronanalytical or bottom up approach (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Tebble, 1992), both being methods of systemic functional linguistics.

The speech act [the smallest unit] occurs within a conversational move of which there are typically two that occur within a conversational exchange. One or more exchanges comprise a transaction. A transaction comprises one or typically a sequence of exchanges of a particular type; and the genre element is made up of one or more transactions on one topic. Using this method of analysis the structure of each discourse can be identified and compared, revealing patterns of generic structure. (Tebble, 2009, p. 209)

As long as there is no challenge to the genre structure by virtue of an intercultural difference (such as an alternative generic structure for the particular event), positivistic functional description is adequate.

What is particularly helpful about using a medical encounter as an introduction to discourse analysis is the care that physicians must take to ensure that they comprehend what the patient is telling them. Tebble (2009) continues by describing “two significant strategies used in professional consultations and interviews to check information are the *formulation* and the *observation*” (p. 212). Adopted from conversation analysis (*cf* Tebble, 1992), “each is the first part of an adjacency pair: formulation and decision; and

observation and decision” (p. 213). ‘Adjacency pairs’ is the technical term identifying the complementary ‘exchanges’ introduced above as conversational moves.

What critical discourse analysis of the *CL5* volume offers as an addition and complement to functionalist description is the observation that turn-taking does not always follow in neat sequences of sensible adjacency pairs (*cf* Schegloff, Sacks & Jefferson, 1974). Throughout the *CL5* discourse there is evidence that meanings are not always transparent; that shared understanding requires back-and-forth, give-and-take exchanges. The intercultural challenges of interpreted communication manifest at two levels: the turn and the word. As noted above, problems with turn-taking are frequently elided. Problems with the word receive the most attention.

The positivist notions that meaning is self-evident and controlled by the speaker are assumptions that can only hold up if one views language and language use as permanently fixed. Ng provides a neat demonstration that this is inaccurate even in law: “there is no such thing as a forever accurate translation of ‘burglary,’ whose meaning has changed and can be expected to change as time goes by” (2009, p. 44). Likewise, the structuralist goals of semantic mapping and notions like equivalence establish fixed targets that may serve more as impediments to effective communication than support; particularly so in rapidly changing economic and environmental/institutional conditions.

The spread of English as a lingua franca has also generated frustration among community interpreters who believe they would be better able to render target language utterances from a native language source than from English spoken non-fluently. Ozolins & Hale describe the increased anecdotal evidence...of this phenomenon of difficult to grasp English (in the case of English-speaking countries) of significant numbers of

professionals, themselves migrants, who increasingly provide the workforce in public health systems and elsewhere, leading to problems for interpreters no less than for many English-speaking patients. (2009, p. 5)

Ortega Herráez et al. report a somewhat similar situation in Spain, where police interpreters who said they did not explain cultural differences were those working with English, and in most cases using it as a contact language, so it is quite likely that they did not have access to the cultural background of the speakers in question, since it was not a native English-speaking culture. (2009, p. 157)

Recall that the policing situation in Spain already constrains interpreters greatly, heightening concerns about anyone using a non-fluent language to give testimony or otherwise discuss legalities. It is not only English that presents such challenges of comprehensibility. Basque/Spanish interpreters, for instance, need to be familiar with six dialects (González and Auzmendi, 2009), and familiarity with many Chinese dialects is necessary for Cantonese/English interpreters in Hong Kong (Ng, 2009).

Rather than interpreting between languages with well-known common grammars, interpreters will be increasingly called upon to ‘interpret’ source language utterances that are idiosyncratic and inventive, rather than conventional. This is quite evident in the European Parliament where the use of non-fluent, mother-tongue-inflected English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) challenges conference interpreters (Kent, 2009). These concerns with the complexity and nuance of languages are dynamic features of transnationalism that can only be resolved through increased cooperation in interpreted intercultural interaction. But is insisting on the need enough to make it happen? “It is...critical for all participants in interpreted encounters to have a mutual understanding of each other’s roles and needs” (Ozolins & Hale, 2009, p. 3). Achieving increased comprehension by

interpretees of the interpreter's professional performance capacities is blocked by norms that insist on interpreter invisibility and non-intervention.

3.3.5 Going Beyond (Applied Discourse Analysis 5): Where Does the Profession Want Community SI To Go?

Positive structuralism stops its analysis with description, hiding its prescriptions which are always latent and implied, and sometimes overtly stated. For instance, Tebble writes: "Knowing the genre that one is interpreting means knowing the stages of the speech event" (p. 209). This is an example of the normalcy of hegemonic ideology. It is perhaps a subtle point, but the idea that one can learn one structure and apply that lesson to every similar encounter is an oversimplification and a disservice to cultural variability. Interpretivist analysis goes further. Applying a critical lens suggests that some elements of the discourse analysis presented so far suggest that interpreters and academics of SI participate and talk about the practice of SI in ways that co-construct the very dynamics we seek to remedy.

Specifically, the discourse in *CL5* demonstrates concern with language more than concern with understanding. This was illustrated earlier with the list of quotes illustrating three tensions in research discourse about simultaneous interpretation. González & Auzmendi, for instance, put the lens on "the process which the language had to go through" (2009, p. 137), and Ng's (2009) study essentially boils down to a debate between the semantic mapping of disembodied languages ("translation") to the socially-experienced human-to-human co-construction of shared understandings ("interpretation"). Lee's advocacy for "absolute criteria" in the assessment of interpreting performance (2009, p. 174) carries the structuralist paradigm's focus on language as

interpreting studies' proper object of research to its linguistic paradigm extreme as the sole basis for evaluation. The argument Lee provides is rational:

Since interpreting performance assessment tends to rely on the demonstration of skills rather than on tasks that test comprehension of the source speech, understanding may have to be assessed only through the message rendition." (p. 174)

Positivist implication? The skill of finding and uttering equivalent words must be performed 'right' the 'first' time, all the time. Because (goes the hegemonic ideology) there is no time for 'extra' turns in pursuit of clarification or other information to support an interpretation most suitable to the unique configuration of participants in any actual setting.

However, the contribution from Pöchhacker & Kolb (2009) demonstrates what could happen in real life when interpreters and interpretees share responsibility for documenting the results of a legal interview with deliberate regard to the future trajectory of the written document as a proxy for the personified body of the asylum seeker. This attention and cooperative interaction by the interpreter with the interpretees (and vice-versa) resembles more closely that of the doctor who genuinely wants to understand the health and medical conditions of a patient. These enactments and representations of interpreting suggest that the problem of interpreter assessment is to construe 'understanding' in interactive, not only linguistic, terms.

While the asylum interpreter in Austria (Pöchhacker and Kolb, 2009) takes on a great deal of responsibility for the written record, Ortega Herráez et al. found 100% of police interpreters (in Spain) stated that they

would never explain questions of procedure, and we would attribute this answer to the fact that in police settings there is more control over the

interpreters (they do not have the opportunity to chat with non-Spanish speakers) and the fact that there is less procedure to explain. (p. 159)

While it is interesting that the action of “explain[ing] questions of procedure” is equated with “chat,”¹²² the point to highlight here involves the matter and perception of control. “Police interpreters would seem to perceive greater risk in acting on their own initiative, probably because they work in a setting where encounters are much more ritualized and restrictive” (p. 159). What Ortega Herráez et al. are expressing is similar to that suggested by Pöchhacker and Kolb: both sets of authors refer to the relationship between interpreter’s role performance and the exertion of control by the setting. Sharing responsibility for the written record “challenges established principles of professional ethics,” explain Pöchhacker and Kolb (2009, p. 133), because “the production of [the written record] should, in principle, be the sole task of the recording clerk working under the guidance of—and from dictation by—the adjudicating official conducting the hearing” (p. 133) and interpreters are “essentially [to render] what was said rather than what is to be written” (p. 133).

The attachment to “what was said” is a language ideology that exerts control over the interpretee’s voice by restricting the interpreter’s role. This articulation of role with control (or control with role) is constructed in this academic meta-discourse through authorial metacommunication in a passive voice, one that elides human agency (Pinker, 2007). On the one hand, the discourse about the need for professionalization indicates

¹²² The idea that non-interpreted ‘direct talk’ by an interpreter with an interpretee is ‘only chatter’ (rather than about something of substance for the effectiveness of the interpreted communication) could be argued as an example of miniaturization (Sen, 2006), in which a whole person and all of their identities are reduced to one dimension, in this case, that of someone who does not speak the dominant language.

distress over, as represented in the Basque case, “the lack of standardization” and “lack of tradition” (González and Auzmendi, 2009, p. 136). Yet Roberts-Smith (2009) makes similar claims about “a professional structure of recognized and guaranteed competencies” (p. 33) for court SI in Australia where professional SI is well-established but still not yet understood as an interactive mode of intercultural communication.

The “facts” in the *CL5* research discourse, however, do show normative structures, traditions and even an ideology regarding professionalization. The intense focus on the interpreter, the interpreter’s role, and the interpreter’s linguistic competence (etcetera) effectively eliminates serious consideration of interpretees’ agency and responsibilities during SI. One could say there is little space for exploring interpreter’s responsibility for quality in SI because interpreters fill the stage. The structuralist paradigm, with its building-block-like emphasis on discrete words and assumed equivalences of meaning, invokes a totalizing differentiation and imposes a discursive barrier against uses of language that might invite different emphases. The asylum interpreter’s give-and-take interactions with interprees is a precursor to interpretees taking more turns paraphrasing and confirming mutual understanding as a new normal of proactive participation in ensuring mutual understanding.

Again, the structuralist, building-block logic presumes meaning resides exclusively in diction and other linguistic categories rather than being socially constructed among conscious beings through mutual processes of communication. Ng advocates changing the weighting from overemphasizing written translation’s language criteria of adequacy and acceptability to privileging simultaneous interpretation’s emphasis on fluency and comprehensibility (2009, p. 51). Researchers in Interpreting

Studies could also conceivably cooperate to make a deliberate discourse move similar to that made by Merlini & Favaron when they opted to describe the interpreter behavior of speaking in the first person as a norm and not a rule (2009).

Garrett (2009) also offers prescriptions for change. On one hand, she advocates the positive outcomes associated with community-oriented SI. “There are very compelling safety, equity and quality arguments to support” maintaining universal access to interpreters for patients with limited English proficiency (p. 78). Specifically, Garrett elaborates:

Professional interpreters have been linked with increased patient satisfaction, greater patient involvement, improved understanding, greater compliance with treatment, improved access, and reduced medical errors (Brach and Fraser, 2000; Timmins, 2002; Jacobs et al., 2001; Flores et al., 2003; Baker et al., 1996; Flores et al., 2005)” (2009, p. 73)

On the other hand, Garrett maps a route for aligning advocacy for SI with other discourses, insisting:

“Interpreter service policy needs to become firmly situated with the healthcare discourse related to quality, safety and effectiveness [by establishing] strong linkages between language ability, patient safety and equity. “(2009, p. 79).

Similar linkages need to be built with interpretees in other fields. “To study communication,” Carey asserts, “is to examine the actual social process wherein significant symbolic forms are created, apprehended and used” (1992, p. 30). In this section I have sought to present a view of the situation of community interpreting in a changing landscape of transnational backlash and paradigmatic growth. The method has been to apply critical discourse analysis to a representative sample of academic meta-discourse about community SI, and present these results in a forward-looking way. We have created the field in which we work, teach, and study. We can change it.

3.4 Consciousness in *CL5*

The concept of *sharing responsibility* acknowledges the relational and interactive aspects of communication in ways that emphasizing quality and (interpreter) responsibility alone do not. “How little attention has been paid to language interpretation and the role of the interpreters in maintaining ethical *relationships*,” conclude Kaufert et al. in their review of biomedical research ethics (emphasis added, 2009, p. 247). The contributions to *CL5* show how the relationships inevitably co-constructed among interpretees, and between interpretees and interpreters, are routinely de-emphasized in favour of focusing on criteria for (presumably?) more measurable things such as the ‘quality’ of ‘language’ and/or ‘interpretation’, the definition of role (the interpreter’s, not anyone else’s), and articulations and assessments of ethics (solely of the interpreter, alone and in isolation). This skewed pattern of measurement tends to hold true even when the overt object of analysis or theoretical framing emphasizes the interactive, social construction of relationships and identities.

3.4.1 Beyond the Brackets: Discovering the Interpreter’s Unconscious

Rather than an either/or competition, can we cooperate to talk a complementary interplay between structuralism and interactionism into social practice? In discussing the efficacy of rating scales, Lee asserts there is no alternative for testing comprehension than “message rendition” (2009, p. 174) and “absolute criteria” (p. 174), while at the same time acknowledging the performance assessment by scales “is by no means an exact science” (p. 174), relying to an unspecified (perhaps unspecifiable) degree upon “intuition” (p. 171). Two of the editors of *CL5* pick up on this question about intuition in their introduction to the volume (Ozolins & Hale, p. 7). Meanwhile, seven of Lee’s nine

participants “found band scales helpful for consistent rating” and argues that even the responses of the remaining two skeptical participants are positive: “indicat[ing] that the band scales appropriately described the level of qualities the raters unconsciously or consciously expected in interpreting performance” (2009, p. 181).¹²³

On the other hand, comparative literature from the field of second language assessment cautions, “rater training helps to improve reliability in assessment but has limitations in eliminating the rater bias and rater effects (Weigle, 1994)” (in Lee, 2009, p. 183). The acknowledgement of bias and rater effects may be what inspired Lee to include the presence of unconscious expectations by raters of interpreting quality. What she describes is assessment performance behavior by raters that appears similar to acquired interpreting behavior by interpreters, specifically Lee lists the rater’s own reliance on memory, inconsistency by the rater in referring to the source text or referring to it only when deviations were suspected, and eventually desisting in referring to the source text at all (p. 183).

Lee proposes what I would characterize as a loose equation for measuring accuracy based on perceived deviations from the source text, arguing that “the gravity of which should be considered in terms of the effect on the coherent and faithful rendering of the message” (2009, p. 175). Deviations and their severity include the presence and frequency of “omissions, additions, unjustifiable changes or misinterpretations of the

¹²³ Lee (2009) explains: “The term ‘band’ usually implies a range of possible scores and, therefore, band scores may be converted into test scores (Alderson, 1991, p.73).” In this case, “The number of bands in each criterion was determined on the basis of the existing weighting, namely 6 points for Accuracy in content, 6 points for Target Language Quality, and 3 points for Delivery” (p. 176).

meaning and intention of the speaker” (p. 175).¹²⁴ Regarding omissions in interpretation, Ortega Herráez, et al. report:

In general, court interpreters stated that when they omit information it is for communicative purposes, whereas the health/social services interpreter stated (quite openly) that when they omit it is because they have forgotten the information, have not understood it or do not know how to express it in the target language. (2009, pp. 156-157)

Mentions of the unconscious and conscious omissions in the *CL5* discourse sample invite more exploration of Jemina Napier’s work on these topics. In *Sign language interpreting: Linguistic coping strategies* (2002), Napier explicitly emphasizes “what interpreters do well” (p. 119). She situates her research in the realms of frame theory and discourse processes. Napier’s results bring positivistic structuralism and interpretivist interactionism into the foreground as competing paradigms within the field. Her findings will be explored in chapter six.

3.4.2 Silences...

The theory being proposed is that there has been a “silence” in the discourses about simultaneous interpretation about the realities of interpretation that interferes with professional best practices and interpretee empowerment. Discussion of omissions brings this silence into view. Whether the silence is a manifestation of interpreters’ practical consciousness that is in process of becoming discursive consciousness is an action

¹²⁴ Note: By contrast, evidence of the communication dynamics of self- or other-repair to uttered language is relatively unremarkable in typical, monolingual interaction among engaged and attentive interlocutors (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977). These could also be correctable, if normatively permitted, within interpreted interaction.

research hypothesis. This ‘silence’ protects and hides the simple truth that there can never be a single definitive “translation” that perfectly duplicates its original. The practical reason is because the reference points for meaning across two languages (let alone between unique individuals hailing from distinctly different cultures) never align in complete totality. The philosophical reason is because language is only meaningful when some degree or experience of mutuality is involved: one could almost say that the notion of ‘original’ is itself a myth.

Whether or not a tree makes a sound when it falls in the forest is irrelevant to a deaf person who gleans meaning from their sense of sight and physical perceptions of vibration. The ‘origin’ of meaning is in the simultaneity of co-occurrence . . . imagine ‘message delivery’ and ‘message reception’ occurring in tandem. If a tree falls and the hearing person is startled by the noise, is this more or less meaningful than the deaf person who senses the rumble in the ground? Both have ‘received’ a communication: is it the same one? How could they check? Would they even wonder if they had ‘understood the same thing’? Interpreting dishevels the flow of presumed mutual comprehension that is taken for granted when communicating in the same language. Rather than two people communing on a shared experience of crashing noise, or two people communing on a shared experience of trembling ground, interpreting allows people to connect their disparate experiences to the same event. The question of participation involves interpretees’ desire and abilities to forge commonality by engaging the differences. The question of professional practice involves the extent to which interpreters mask or present these differences.

Challenges by Deaf interpretees to sign language interpreters are signals that they are aware and sensitive to instances of masking, which is contrary to readers' experiences of written translation in which they are too removed to notice evidence of deviation or omission. Edwin Gentzler refers to translation silences:

“Those ‘silences’ in the text, often known only to the translator, were often not only the most interesting in terms of creativity, but also the most revealing with regard to cultural differences” (Edwin Gentzler, 1993, p. xii in Hatim, 2001, p. 44)

The silences Gentzler refers to are in written literary translations that have been specifically adapted to conform or appeal to the Western reader. Gentzler comments that these ‘silences’ are accompanied by “certain costs” (which are left unnamed). Are similar costs of ‘silence’ involved in simultaneous interpretation? We might consider such ‘silences’ as clues to the presence of alternatively constructed timespaces, each premised (constructed, maintained and re-created) on the basis of difference.¹²⁵ This clue to an alternative chronotope, toward another way of orienting social interaction with the unfolding of identity, relationships, culture and social reality, raises questions concerning what would be required from interpretees to enable their creativity to recognize and engage with the alternative flow of a interpreted communication.

¹²⁵ Derrida's *différance* (1963/1973) involves a philosophical and literary critique of language and language use that highlights the impermanent and unfixable nature of words. From this poststructural vantage point, the temporal aspect of meaning-making regards the non-arrival of any single absolute definition; from such a view, either chaos or creativity can commence. There is much to his philosophy that could be brought to bear on the challenges of simultaneous interpretation.

3.5 Addressing the Tensions in Simultaneous Interpreting Research and Practice

The tensions this critical discourse analysis brings into view hold across interpreters' and interpreter researchers' perceptions of interpretees in all the *CL5* community interpreting contexts named above, including the outlier chapter on interpretees in conference interpreting. Conference interpreters at the European Parliament in 2005 were even more explicit than the community interpreters in their concern that Members of the EP (MEPs) do not understand or use the system of SI in the EP properly, referring to MEPs' choices to communicate in a second or third language instead of their most fluent language with urgent terms such as "danger" and "loss" (Kent, 2007).

The similarities among conference SI and community SI settings are concentrated in terms of what interpretees know and do not know about how to participate in SI, and appear centralized around matters of exercising voice through the agency of the interpreter rather than in spite of the interpreter. (The assumption is that attitudes and attempts at 'control of meaning' is an expression of the desire for voice.) These findings are a reason why consciousness is situated as a reference point for action research. The speculation is that increases in shared discursive consciousness about how to achieve voice during SI will generate the circulation of more linguistic and cultural differences, thus contributing productively to the maintenance of human diversity.

To repeat, the three tensions that become apparent from a critical discourse analysis of a situated timesnap of interpreting research are:

- 1 heterogenous realities in the field being opposed to a mythical ideal of communicative flow;

- 2 interpretees perceived as unskilled in the use of SI while interpreters are constrained from providing appropriate instruction; and
- 3 ideas about language and meaning that are inconsistent and contradictory; a confusion that encompasses interpretees and interpreters.

These tensions become apparent by reading the academic meta-discourse critically, through the lenses of two different paradigms: structural, i.e., functional linguistics; and interpretivist, i.e., socially co-constructed through the interplay of language(s) and social interaction. Applying one paradigmatic view to the knowledge being represented in the other paradigmatic view does justice to the complexity of interpreted intercultural communication.

3.6 Convergence or Divergence in Interpreting Studies?

The field of translation studies came into being during the 1960s mainly through the engagement of literary translators with intellectual developments in philosophies of language and linguistics. The challenges and problems of translating cultural differences and meanings of artistic works (especially poetry and fiction) into other languages are taken very seriously. Over several decades, a range of approaches, strategies and debates for dealing with linguistic differences and the power of the translator have been explored both generally and specifically, both as abstract principle and within contexts particularized by cultural boundaries between the language(s) of original literary work and the target language(s) of translation.

In contrast, interpreting researchers (and professional interpreters) have historically engaged the intercultural social interaction aspects of simultaneous interpreting without calling into question the simple functional linguistic paradigm that

constrains interpretee—interpretee engagement through a rigid delineation of interpreter role and an evaluative emphasis on fluency and the smoothness of communicative flow). Perhaps it is the objectification of language captured in print¹²⁶ that has enabled translation theory to keep pace with developments and divergences in social theory over the past decades.

Meanwhile, in the last decade within the field of interpreting studies, Franz Pöchhacker (2007) celebrates identifying that researchers of simultaneous interpretation were just beginning to converge into (what he considers) a coherent disciplinary space. He describes this space as characterized by an emphasis on “the social sphere of interaction in which interpreting takes place” (p. 12) through “the dialogic interactionist approach developed mainly for research on community interpreting” (p. 11).

Pöchhacker (2007) traces how interpreting studies has finally moved beyond gross features of modality (e.g., spoken or signed languages) and (what he describes as) categorizations based on model or paradigm to

a conceptual continuum, with two broad distinctions: first, between international and intra-social, or ‘community-based’ settings; and, second, with regard to the format of interaction—prototypically, multilateral conferencing vs. face-to-face dialogue. Drawing on these two conceptual dimensions allows for much middle ground, including conference-like events in the community (especially involving Deaf people) or dialogue interpreting in diplomacy. (2007, p. 12)

¹²⁶ As mentioned earlier, translation deals primarily with written texts. The spatial and temporal fixing of written text in a static, stable configuration as a tangible, material artefact constitutes an object of study that is qualitatively different than the effervescent spoken word or gestural sign that vanishes along sound and light waves (except when live interaction is recorded for replay).

Within this disciplinary convergence, however, remains a strong and as yet un-problematized emphasis on the source text and accuracy of interpretation measured linguistically. The root definitions of interpreting from within the field refer to Gerver's (1971) complex information processing, bolstered by fascination within cognitive science to map the linguistic functions in the brain (cf Beaugrande, 1980). While there are traditions that focus more on target-text construction (e.g., Toury, 1995), "neither version of the target-text-oriented translation-theoretical [skopos theory¹²⁷ or Toury's] approach has gained a high profile in interpreting research" (Pöchhacker, 2007, p. 17).

In other words, the basic functional linguistic paradigm has not been overthrown; its challengers have not yet prevailed. Perhaps this is because of the heightened sensitivity of interpreters and interpretees who are engaged in actual social interaction with each other, in contrast to authors and animators of written texts for readers with whom they most likely never meet in person?¹²⁸ It could be that the spatial and temporal distances implied by translation has allowed translation theorists to examine more

¹²⁷ "Spearheaded by Hans Vermeer at the University of Heidelberg, the German functionalist theory of translation, or skopos theory, proved largely compatible with the decidedly descriptive approach to the target-oriented study of translation as promoted in particular by Gideon Toury (1995)" (Pöchhacker, 2007, p. 17).

¹²⁸ "The methods [of fieldwork] used will depend on research goals as well as practical and political realities of the fieldwork situation¹⁰" (Farnell and Graham 1998:438). Footnote 10: "The political entailments of field research are widely acknowledged in anthropology (see Rabinow 1977; Fox 1991; Clifford and Marcus 1986). They have received less attention in linguistics (see Aissen 1992). Briggs (1986) discusses asymmetries of power in linguistic anthropology with a focus on the interview" (Farnell and Graham 1998, p. 443).

features of interlingual communication with a certain degree of protection from consequences.¹²⁹

One of the effects of this removal from the immediacy of spontaneous social interaction may be part of what has enabled translation theorists and researchers to keep apace of social theory in general. Meanwhile, the kinship Pöchhacker writes about is not a convergence of different paradigms, it is a hegemonic consolidation of the dominant linguistic paradigm of equivalence and fluency. The constraining elements of this established academic meta-discourse can be conceived as a structural control to limit or contain the increased variability of meaning-making that necessarily emerges when the heterogeneous and foreignizing aspects of intercultural interaction are included in the products and processes of simultaneous interpretation.

Later, the case will be presented that much of the progress which has occurred in moving the field of interpreting studies toward recognition of the complexities of meaning-making are largely due to criticism and resistance from culturally Deaf communities. Pöchhacker nods in this direction, commenting on “the important contribution of sign language interpreting researchers such as Cynthia Roy (2000)”

¹²⁹ Specifically, during translation the spatial disconnect among reader(s), author(s) and translator(s) and the temporal asynchronicity as writing, translating, and reading occur at non-simultaneous times for each participant, creating a bufferzone for reactions that might be embarrassing or awkward (or perceived as such) in immediate face-to-face interaction.

(2007, p. 17) shaping the convergence he perceives on the triadic nexus¹³⁰ of “dialogic discourse and interaction” (p. 17). In a general sense I do not disagree with him; this convergence is occurring. What I am contesting is the extent to which these theories from other disciplines and sub-fields are changing actual training, practice, performance and participation in intercultural interpreted communication, rather than co-opted to support the established functional linguistic paradigm.

Resistance to the hegemony of the functional linguistic paradigm does not often come from minority language speakers during live interpreting, and there is (as yet, to my knowledge) no other language group with a voice as consistently challenging as that of Deaf culture. Instead, resistance comes from the discontented field of translation studies: its diverse theories and densely developed history. The gulf between translation studies and interpreting studies establishes a bridge between the empowered Deaf voice in community interpreting, and the debates and practices of multilingualism in the European Union, specifically as they play out in the institutional context of simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament.

3.7 Into the Field: Simultaneous Interpretation in Action

The preceding critical discourse analysis of a situated timesnap of academic research about community interpreting, in comparison with a range of theoretical

¹³⁰ “Most consequentially, Cecilia Wadensjö (1998) view of interpreting as managing discourse in a triadic relationship, with a focus on interactivity rather than monologic text production, shaped a new paradigm. Centered on dialogic discourse and interaction (DI), this ‘DI paradigm’ drew mainly on concepts and methods from such fields as sociolinguistics, conversation analysis and social psychology” (Pöchhacker, 2007, p. 17).

developments in the field of translation studies, establishes the need for paradigmatic thinking that includes interpretees as well as interpreter-practitioners, trainers, and researchers. An inclusive and foreignizing engagement of participants within the field of simultaneous interpretation is hypothesized to promote meta-communicative collaboration that can be consciously used for the social good. Meta-communication is talk that explores both discursive consciousness and practical consciousness. Instead of the typical literature review, a critical discourse analysis of carefully selected, representative instances in the research literature shows the effects of selective attention, particularly in Kenneth Burke's (1966) sense of a "terministic screen" in which every utterance entails a selection of speech acts that simultaneously de-selects alternative acts with their associated indexicalities¹³¹ (or thrust, to suggest a synonym in Will's term) and entailments. Both entailment and indexicality refer to effects of language use and social interaction over time. Whether deliberately or unconsciously chosen, language use inevitably directs the attention toward certain meanings and social realities (selecting them) and away from other meanings and social realities (deselecting them). This fact opens the possibility for conceptualizing consciousness, and unconsciousness, as dialogic

¹³¹ Urcuoli 1995:109 in (Farnell and Graham 1998, p. 416): "The property that language shares with all sign-systems is its indexical nature: its maintenance and creation of social connections, anchored in experience and the sense of the real. Linguistic indexes may be grammaticalized or lexicalized as 'shifters'—devices that locate actions in time and space: personal pronouns, verb tenses, demonstratives, and time and space adverbs. These are deictic in that they point outward from the actor's location. The structure of action fans out from the center, the locus of I and You, to delineate where and when everything happens relative to the central actors: he and she versus I and You; there versus here; then versus now; present versus non-present (past or future). . . . The indexes that embody discourse extend beyond pronouns, adverbs and verbal categories both to the sounds and shapes of speech that identify the actor with a particular group and to the speech acts marking the actor's intent as others recognize it. In short indexes make the social person [identity, role]."

accomplishments,¹³² that is, as outcomes and effects of people engaging with each other through social interaction and language in use, i.e., through talk.

Vuorikoski claims, “It is a crucial issue in interpreting to find out whether the SI version allows the listener to formulate an interpretation of the TT message which corresponds to the one he would have formulated if he had been able to understand the original speech” (2004, p. 64). Important as this standard has been, rather than continuing in this equivalence paradigm, this research is motivated to try and understand what happens if equivalence is assumed as only ever an approximate achievement. In other words, if receivers’ interpretations of meaning (s) differ, how do people in interpreted communication make sense and go on? (cf Cronen, 2001). What are the outcomes of ‘going on’ in a democratic institution endowed with the power of making public policy?

¹³² Michael Billig explores the dialogic co-construction of unconsciousness in *Freudian Repression* (1999).

CHAPTER 4

SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

4.1 Political Context: Justice and Home Affairs

The system of simultaneous interpretation (SI) in the European Parliament (EP) relies upon technology and the human talent for communication. The purpose of SI in the EP is to facilitate the European Union's legislative process in coordination with the European Commission and the Council of Presidents ("the Council"). The Council puts forth five-year-long "programmes" that are established by the first Presidency in each five year electoral term. The main part of this research was conducted in the last year of the Hague Programme, which (among many, many other things) kicked off the second phase of policy-making on a common European asylum policy. The asylum dossier became central to this research project when the researcher was allowed to observe the different types of meetings involved in establishing asylum law for the European Union. This access began with an observation of the EP's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), included meetings of the Asylum dossier Working Group (composed of a representative MEP from each political group in the LIBE Committee), and extended to the Trialogue meetings where the lead MEP on the Asylum dossier (called the Rapporteur) negotiated with representatives from the Council and representatives from the European Commission ("the Commission").

Some Trialogues during the Hague Programme were different than previous Trialogues because the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) had created the mechanism of *co-decision*, in which the Council and Commission could no longer disregard the EP's political voice as elected representatives of the European public sphere. The new

Triologue rules require the Council and Commission to engage and compromise, rather than just consider the EP's consultation advice. The Asylum dossier was among the early, precedent-setting co-decision legislation, not the old (one might say disempowered or disempowering mode of) consultation, so the political stakes for participating Members and the overall Parliament were high. In addition to establishing a new European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and improving the existing directives, the Rapporteur was carrying expectations from all the MEPs to uphold and even increase the influence of the EP in the overall governance structure of the European Union. The Rapporteur "is responsible from the beginning to the end of a specific topic" (F53),¹³³ specifically for coordinating the movement of legislation through all its requisite stages, establishing the Working Group's position by negotiating with the representatives from all the political groups (who are called Shadow Rapporteurs, usually shortened to "Shadows"), gaining support from the whole Committee in order to negotiate with the Commission and Council in the Trialogues, and writing the final report.

We have so-called shadow rapporteurs...because if your [political] Group doesn't get the Report, you need certainly someone who...makes the same work as a rapporteur in your group. So, who is from the first to the end as it was published in the official schedule, knows what is going with this legislation, makes all the professional negotiation, plus, of course, the political negotiation in the Group and among all Members. (F53)

¹³³ The coding system for participants in the research is divided into three categories: F refers to any permanent or temporary staff of the Parliament, who are described as "officials" or "*fonctionnaires*." The Members, "M," are divided into two categories, those representing "Old" Member countries (from before the big bang enlargement which vastly increased the language regime for simultaneous interpretation) and those representing "New" Member countries: OM and NM. The numbers are randomly assigned.

In the case of the Asylum dossier, the only settings utilizing simultaneous interpretation were during progress reports and voting in the full LIBE Committee, and voting in Plenary Sessions.

The English fluency of the participants in non-interpreted Asylum dossier meetings varied, allowing observation and inquiry about communication dynamics in the absence of interpretation. In Hymesian terms, these variations in setting occur within one overall scene of social interaction. The overall scene is European multilingual democracy.¹³⁴ Within this scene, across the settings, participants engage in specific events, generating innumerable acts of communication according to various keys (tones or moods) and according to particular genres, all within the scope of a single instrument: the system of simultaneous interpretation. (See Table 2.)

¹³⁴ The labels “multilingual,” “democratic,” and even “European” can be (and are) contested. Only the notion and practices of multilingualism are enjoined here.

Table 2. Hymesian SPEAKING Rubric Applied to the European Parliament

Theoretical element of communication events	Applied element of communication
Scene	multilingual European democracy
Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fully-interpreted Plenaries • partially-interpreted Groups, Committees, Working Groups • non-interpreted Working Groups
Participants	<p>Primary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretees (Members of the European Parliament) interpreters European Parliament Interpreters (EPIs) <p>Secondary:*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members' Assistants • Permanent Staff • Guests • Visitors <p>Enabling:**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technicians
Ends	<i>Not yet determined</i>
Acts	<i>Every quote is an act</i>
Key	<i>Variable per event setting and participant</i>
Instrument	The system of simultaneous interpretation
Genre	Political

**Secondary Participants sometimes engage as Primary Participants*

***Other enabling participants are in the scheduling office of the Interpreting Directorate; no one from that office was interviewed during this project.*

4.1.1 Getting Past the Glitz: Setting(s), Scene and Instrument

During the very last interview I wrote in my field notebook, “The interpreters [still] assume plenary is the object of interest. Members too.” How people felt about the plenary meetings in the hemicycle, with its full complement of official languages and hundreds of interpreters, was routinely assumed to be the only relevant subject for research about interpreting. After eight months of observation and conversations, it seemed I had been unable to pierce the established discourse about SI in the EP. Rhetoric

has effectively established the image of the European Parliament in plenary session as the icon of multilingual European democracy, crucially not just in the public imagination but also in the minds of its primary participants: interpreters and interpretees. This high profile motivated Vuorikoski's decision to select the plenary for her study.

In the words of Carlo Marzocchi and Giancarlo Zucchetto, who discuss interpreting in the EP institutional context, the monthly plenary assembly is "the climax of an interpreter's work at the EP, both in terms of peer recognition and in terms of effort" (1997: 81)" (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 16).

That intensity also established Vuorikoski's baseline for identifying constraints, because "the interpreter may experience a feeling of having reached the limit of what be interpreted" (p. 16-17). My motivation was to understand the interpreting occurring during the other part of the Parliament's work.

Parliament's work is divided into two main stages: (1) Preparing for the plenary session. This is done by the MEPs in the various parliamentary committees that specialize in particular areas of EU activity. The issues for debate are also discussed by the political groups. (2) The plenary session itself. [...] (in Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 78, quoting a Europa website no longer available)

The preparatory work of MEPs (and their Assistants, Secretariat, Commission and Council staff), constitutes, arguably, the EP's *community* work in order to be able to convene in conference. Interpreters are working in all of these settings.

Behind the primary participants are the invisible technicians who run the enabling electronic infrastructure. Just as there is "a big pyramid of layers" (F13) in the decision-making process, there are also layers of human-designed and operated digital technology supporting the system of simultaneous interpretation. While the hardware is consistent, software is fitted both to the physical space of a given meeting as well as the social purpose of that meeting.

The equipment was described by a technician as “a global system” (F12) because it includes a “microphone conference system” for the Members and an “interpretation system” for the interpreters (F12). The *microphone system* for Members operates differently in the large hemicycles where the plenary sessions are held than in the other rooms where political groups and working committees meet. The *interpretation system* operates the same in either setting. The feature that distinguishes the different use of the Members’ microphone system is the degree of control by the technician. The interpreters’ interpretation system is “always on automatic” (F12), although each interpreter has some programming capability at their individual desk.

The difference between these two systems, microphone and interpretation, is significant but undifferentiated in the primary participants’ discourse about SI in the EP. In seventy-three recorded conversations, Members, their Assistants, and various EU officials (temporary and permanent *fonctionnaires*, that is, Parliament staff and career EU bureaucrats) would talk about the differences in some features of communication depending on the physical location, but not in terms of the technological conditions.¹³⁵ Primary and secondary interpretees (Members and Assistants or Parliament staff, respectively) would describe Plenaries as full assemblies in which Members give speeches mainly for consumption by audiences in their home countries. The intended audience distinguishes the kind of talk that occurs in Plenary from communicating in Committees and Groups where MEPs argue and negotiate with each other over

¹³⁵ The difference in the degree of the technician’s control of Members’ microphones did not rise as a salient issue with the 55 interpreters interviewed in 2005. This does not mean that interpreters are unaware or unaffected by the degree of technician control, only that other concerns were more pressing during that time period.

legislation (Committees) and decide upon strategy according to their political party platform (Groups). Likewise, the distinction between Plenary and Committees or Groups is described by one of the *régie* (control room) technicians in *social* terms:

In the hemicycle, the Members know when they have to speak and how long they can speak. They have one minute or one half minute speaking time. The president has to have the complete control of what's going on. Nobody is able to turn on his microphone and say, "No, I don't like what he's talking about," or things like that.... It's contained because they are talking about rules, about debates they do in the rooms. If you go to the hemicycle and listen to what's going on, then you are not aware of what they did work. You don't understand what they're talking about, because they are talking about rule number 22. They give a number. You don't understand because you had to be in the room or you had to read the subject to know what's going on. In the rooms it's different because every group has his rooms or his room, and in the room they debate. So number 116 talks to this one and asks a question. He answers. It's a relay debate. In the hemicycle they don't debate. (F12)

In addition to naming the social features of interaction, the technician's practical consciousness distinguishes between communication that occurs "in the room" or "in the hemicycle."

This is a subtle point, but *the users* of SI in the EP, the MEPs who are involved in these social interactions, refer to these differences based on the meeting's social purpose. None indicated awareness that the technical conditions for the interpreters' interpreting are different in different settings. The phrases "in the room" and "in the hemicycle" do not appear as significantly in the discourses of MEPs and interpreters. (See Table 3.) When these phrases are used they refer to the physical, geographic location of meetings not to label the overt types of social interaction that occur in each setting: "debate" occurs

in Groups and Committees (not in ‘rooms’) and “one minute speeches” occur in Plenary (not in ‘hemicycles’).¹³⁶

Table 3. Geographical and Social Constructs in Two Discourses about Simultaneous Interpreting in the European Parliament

Discourse	Setting		Construct
Technicians	<i>in the room</i>	<i>in the hemicycle</i>	Geographical
MEPs	<i>in the Group / in the Committee</i>	<i>in the Plenary</i>	Social

Between the conference microphone and interpretation systems, there is “a working reason” (F12) that motivates the degree of automation used to regulate the control permitted to Members as participants in the meeting. The overt reason is time management of turn-taking. (Of course the Members know these rules; they abide by them according to practical consciousness. The point is that they don’t talk about their effect on the quality or outcomes of intercultural communication, suggesting an absence or gap in discursive consciousness.) This technological differentiation to regulate control co-occurs with distinctive patterns of social interaction.¹³⁷ Mentioning this juxtaposition now is to establish the overarching logic for comparing “X” communication-without-SI (as in the case of the Asylum Working Group and other smaller meetings relevant to the Asylum dossier) with “Y” communication-using-SI (the larger Group and Committee

¹³⁶ There are time limits for turns in Committees and Groups too, but the one-minute speeches given during Plenaries are (typically) aimed at home constituencies with only incidental or tangential meaning for their work with other Members.

¹³⁷ There is no chicken or egg dilemma here; the human social system and the engineered technology co-evolved.

meetings “in the room” when the interpretation system is used, and the Plenaries “in the hemicycles” where the conference microphone system is used).

There is a continuum of simultaneously-interpreted communication in the EP anchored at one end by the fully interpreted, high-publicity plenaries and at the other end by small, un-interpreted face-to-face meetings in which the nitty-gritty details of comprehensive EU law are contested and confirmed. In the background, technicians believe they are even more invisible to the system of SI in the EP than the interpreters, yet they are absolutely crucial to the process and from their vantage point are able to articulate discursive consciousness about the system:

For the members, the machine doesn't exist....the machine doesn't exist. They know that there are interpreters, but they don't know there's a machine, so they don't realize that there's a machine between the interpreters and the person. So when something works well, they thank interpreters, but they never talk about the technician or technical stuff. But if something goes wrong technical, they know how to find them. (F12)

Despite (or perhaps because of) the invisibility, Parliament technicians have knowledge about the system of SI in the EP that is not present in other discourses, such as those of European Parliament interpreters and the users of SI in the EP.

Subtle differences in the discourses of participants in communication events at the European Parliament may represent a limit or boundary between practical consciousness and discursive consciousness. Specifically, the generic (popular, common) discourse about SI in the EP assumes that the conditions of participating in interpreted communication are the same in these two scenarios. In other words, the assumption appears to be that whether you are “in the room” or “in the hemicycle” the interpreting should be done in the same way. Intriguingly for me as an action learner, it was only when the research widened beyond the dualism of “interpretees—interpreters” to include

the role of the technician that a meta-communicative vantage point on the established practical consciousness could be ascertained. Which is to say that I had been lost in the established discourse even though my outsider status provided an external context serving as a point of reference for comparison and contrast.

What I knew about community interpreting for the Deaf was not sensible in the pervasive framework of a technician-controlled “microphone conference system.” Even though I could recognize (at least some of) the conditions and potentials for community-style interpreting “in the room” (where “the interpretation system” is used) I was not able to discern the deeply coded nature of the phrase, “in the room,” nor its contrast with “in the hemicycle,” until someone with a different practical consciousness put the two terms in relation. Instead, in keeping with nearly everyone else, what drew most of my attention were the criticisms of interpreting (which do not distinguish between being “in the room” or “in the hemicycle”).¹³⁸ In part, the focus on users’ criticisms came about because of a previous discourse analysis of what European Parliament Interpreters (EPIs) had to say about working as a professional interpreter in/for the EP. Themes of “danger” and “loss” were prominent in the EPIs discourse, which was “as full of complaints (and occasional compliments) about [MEPs] as their discourse is about [interpreters]” (Kent, 2007, p. 62). That preliminary fieldwork with EPIs will be elaborated below. Of note now is that its

¹³⁸ Criticisms of interpreters do name the settings of “in the Group” and “in the Plenary” as if they are being distinguished but, as will be discussed later, the substance of the criticisms are the same.

findings primed me as an action researcher to notice parallels, divergences, and complementarities in the users' discourse about SI in the EP.¹³⁹

Also important is that the preliminary phase of research happened to occur during the spring of 2004, which was at the end of the first year of the Hague Programme,¹⁴⁰ coinciding with the beginning of the Sixth Term of the European Parliament. The EP as an institution of the European Union emerged from the founding in 1952 of an international, market-motivated European Coal and Steel Community to regulate the “free movement of coal and steel and free access to sources of production” (Europa 2010), which next became the European Economic Community (EEC). The first regulation of the EEC (Regulation No 1, 1958) confirms the legal basis established in the 1957 Treaty of Rome and governs the provision of simultaneous interpretation in the EP today (as well as in the other European Union institutions).

REGULATION No 1 determining the languages to be used by the
European Economic Community

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY,

Having regard to Article 217 of the Treaty which provides that the rules governing the languages of the institutions of the Community shall, without prejudice to the provisions contained in the rules of procedure of the Court of Justice, be determined by the Council, acting unanimously;

¹³⁹ The rigor of action research involves collecting as many perspectives as possible on the whole situation. All selected quotes are either representative instances of common themes or stark outliers whose very difference opens up another angle on the social dynamics.

¹⁴⁰ The Hague Program set out ten priorities for the five years of the 6th Parliamentary term, including an emphasis on strengthening fundamental rights for EU citizens and establishing an asylum support office. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/human_rights/fundamental_rights_within_european_union/116002_en.htm Retrieved 4 March 2014.

Whereas each of the four languages in which the Treaty is drafted is recognised as an official language in one or more of the Member States of the Community;

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

The official languages and the working languages of the institutions of the Community shall be Dutch, French, German and Italian. (European Economic Community, 1958)

Notice that English is not one of the original languages. Each evolution in institutional arrangements and enlargement of members includes a provision amending the original treaty to include official languages of new Member States.

In the European Parliament, Procedural Rule 138 guarantees Members “the right to speak in Parliament in the official language of their choice” and “Interpretation shall be provided in committee and delegation meetings from and into the official languages used and requested by the members and substitutes of that committee or delegation.”¹⁴¹ (See Appendix C for the full text of Rule 138 and its exceptions.) As EU expansion continues, the original linguistic right of choice continues to be extended to new Member States despite concerns about the size, cost, and complication of the system required to enable functional simultaneous interpreting across all language combinations.¹⁴²

Partly in counter to public and political concerns regarding the cost and complexity of the system of SI in the EP, official rhetoric promotes the provision of SI for Members as a distinctively European combination of multilingualism with good

¹⁴¹ 16th edition (2004) Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, <http://www.agora-http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:044:0001:0140:EN:PDF> retrieved 5 March 2014.

¹⁴² Croatia became an official member in 2013.

governance. “Our policy of official multilingualism as a deliberate tool of government is unique in the world. The EU sees the use of its citizens’ languages as one of the factors which make it more transparent, more legitimate and more efficient” (Europa).¹⁴³ Explicitly linking many languages-in-use with quality decision-making is a fascinating claim. “Multilingual communication when people speak...is at the core of [European] Community decision-making” (Europa).¹⁴⁴ These quotations from the official EU website, Europa, establish and promote the rhetorical logic that was active and evident in the discourse of MEPs in 2008-2009, which had also appeared in the earlier (2004) interviews with EP Interpreters. Coincidentally, a major feature of the Sixth Term involved the massive expansion of the system of SI, due to the accession of twelve new Member nations: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

4.1.2 Context and Instrument: Enlargement and Controlled Multilingualism

The language regime¹⁴⁵ for the system of SI in the EP changed considerably due to the enlargement of 2004, because the number of working languages jumped from eleven to twenty-two (see Tables 4 and 5). Technically, 23 languages were official (generating 506 possible language combinations) although Maltese was not being offered

¹⁴³ Europa is the official website of the European Union, constructed and maintained by the European Commission. Retrieved 30 April 2008.

¹⁴⁴ From the Joint Interpreting and Conference Service of the Directorate General on Interpretation (European Commission). Originally retrieved 28 November 2005; has since been relocated (possibly revised).

¹⁴⁵ The term “language regime” is being understood in the context of Hymes’ rubric as the “instrument” of communication in the European Parliament.

as interpreters were still being trained. This expansion more than quadrupled the previous number of SI language combinations needing to be spontaneously accommodated by interpreters from 110 to 462. Extensive planning (Athanassiou 2006, Gazzola 2006) was required at the administrative level just to imagine how to manage the complicated language/interpretation regime (cf Podesta 2001a, 2001b, 2001c). Podesta documents and defends the new language regime called “controlled full multilingualism.” Controlled multilingualism was invented to accommodate the realization that “symmetrical” SI was not going to be achieved for every new language.¹⁴⁶ The notion of symmetry encompasses an equitable mirroring of all languages with each other language.

The precedent of full symmetry was established over the course of growth from four languages (1957 Treaty of Rome),¹⁴⁷ to six (1973), seven (1981), nine (1986), eleven (1995), twenty (2004), and finally to twenty-three (2007) at the time of this research. In the EP prior to the 2004 enlargement, the system of SI in the EP established norms that,

¹⁴⁶ Asymmetry in translation was previously introduced with a quote from Lawrence Venuti (see p. 122, this dissertation).

¹⁴⁷ “ARTICLE 248 This Treaty, drawn up in a single original in the Dutch, French, German and Italian languages, all four texts being equally authentic...”
[http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/emu_history/documents/treaties/rometreaty2.pdf retrieved 4 March 2014]

since 1995, accommodated a language regime of eleven official languages.¹⁴⁸ In standard historical practice, teams of three interpreters would collaborate to cover all the source language combinations into one of these eleven official languages, e.g., Polish, or German, or Portuguese. In interpreter jargon, the language being interpreted into is known as the target language, distinguishing it from the language being interpreted from, which is called the source language. Full symmetry meant that every source language is interpreted into all ten target languages.¹⁴⁹

Full symmetry is an ideal that within any given target language booth, every possible source language that might arise from the interpretees is known to at least one of the team interpreters. This allows any source language to be interpreted into any target language, simultaneously, for all languages spoken or listened to by Members in the meeting. This is why most EP Interpreters (EPIs) must be fluent in at least three or four

¹⁴⁸ In a section called “The legal and ideological basis of multilingualism,” Vuorikoski explains: “It has been said that Europe is on everyone’s lips, but in different languages. Preserving the cultural identity of the Member States has been considered essential in the European context, and one way of maintaining cultural identity has been the language policy which guarantees the official languages of the Member States the status of an official language in the European Union as well. A plurality of cultures has been experienced as a value that the community does not want to surrender; instead, the many ways of thinking have been seen as a challenge rather than a handicap. (Zeyringer 1991: 7) In fact, the European communities are the only international community where the languages of all the Member States enjoy the status of an official language. This policy has been seen to act as a safeguard for political and legal equality, as citizens are able to follow the functioning of the institutions in their own language . (Ramos-Ruano 1991: 61–65)” (2004, p. 73).

¹⁴⁹ As a geometric metaphor, *symmetry* invokes the shape and space filled by language. This is a richer and more satisfying metaphor than the strict mathematical *equality* metaphor used in linguistics.

languages and may be fluent in as many as seven or eight.¹⁵⁰ EPIs are combined in teams so that any source language will be known to at least one member of the team who can interpret into the booth's designated target language. Full symmetry in the pre-enlargement EP was possible for nearly all of the 110 possible combinations of source-to-target languages. So, the Dutch booth, for instance, would have been composed of three interpreters who, among them, were fluent in the other ten official languages: Danish, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish. The only exception to the full symmetry of direct interpretation between each of those official eleven languages occurred when Finland joined the European Union in 1995.

The Finnish exception¹⁵¹ involves an accommodation that is strikingly strange to community-style interpreters. Labelled *retour*, this process refers to Finnish-fluent simultaneous interpreters' interpreting both *out of* Finnish as well as *into* Finnish. In other words, to interpret from Finnish as the source language to another target language, as well as into Finnish as the target language from another source language. In the traditional EP language regime, the former is avoided whenever possible, and the latter is taken as the norm. All interpreters are essentially working 'one-way' into their designated target language. What is unusual about this from the community interpreting point of

¹⁵⁰ Language profiles being sought (as of 2012) include: Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, German, Greek, English, Gaelic, Spanish, Estonian, Finnish, French, Croatian, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Maltese, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Swedish, Arabic, and Russian. (EUROPA) http://europa.eu/interpretation/doc/lang_profiles_in_demand.pdf retrieved 5 March 2014.

¹⁵¹ "For the first time, interpreters had to work in both directions - Finnish staff had to translate [sic] out of and not just into their language, a system called 'retour' in the jargon." *Shanghai Star*, 2003-10-30 Retrieved 9 February 2013. <http://app1.chinadaily.com.cn/star/2003/1030/fe10-1.html>

view is that community-style interpreters have *always* interpreted both ways: the target and source languages switch with the turn-taking among the interpretees. This emphasis and protocol regarding the direction of simultaneous interpretation has been separated for conference-style interpreters in the EP since inception, drawing upon norms established in the WWII War Crimes Tribunal at Nuremberg (which will be described in the next chapter).

This division of simultaneous interpreting by ‘direction’ drives a categorization process based upon fluency and involves notions of passive and active use of languages. The argument emphasizes the potential differences of fluency between understanding ‘what is being said’ (i.e., comprehending the source language) and ‘expressing that comprehension’ in the target language. A lettering system¹⁵² is used to grade linguistic competence: “A” languages are those in which an interpreter is fluent enough to work into from any of the other languages that she or he knows, that is, to generate sensible target language utterances that are sensible to native speakers of that language. The label of a booth (described further below) indicates that all the interpreters on that team are working into an “A” language. “B” languages are those an interpreter knows well enough

¹⁵² “Languages are classified as “A” “B” or “C” languages. The A language is one (native tongue or equivalent) which the interpreter masters perfectly and into which he/she is capable of interpreting consecutively and simultaneously from all his/her working languages. In exceptional cases an interpreter may have two A languages. The B language is one which, without being the main language, is mastered to a level high enough to permit fluent interpretation in consecutive and simultaneous from the A language. The C language is one which is fully understood and from which the interpreter works into his/her A language” (EUROPA)
http://europa.eu/interpretation/accreditation_en.htm Interpreting for Europe: Becoming a freelance interpreter with the European institutions: Language profiles in demand with the EU interpreting services, published 29/10/2010, retrieved 17 June 2012

to work into from their “A” (main) language or languages, meaning the interpreter can perform *retour*.

The Finnish exception occurred because of the linguistic uniqueness of Finnish combined with its relatively small user base: it is referred to as an exotic language, meaning, not one of the most popularly known languages in Europe. Hence, it would happen that an MEP speaking in Finnish would need to be interpreted into all of the other languages, and (for instance) none of the three EPIs in, say, the Italian or Dutch booths during that shift knew Finnish well enough to render a competent interpretation. In this case, a designated EPI in the Finnish booth would perform *retour*, rendering an interpretation of the Finnish source language (their “A” language) into one of the larger languages, one of their “B” languages (typically French or German in that era). Suppose the *retour* language is French. An interpreter in the Italian and Dutch booths (in this example) with French as an “A” or “B” language would treat the *retour* from the Finnish interpreter as the source language and proceed to interpret the French interpretation (of the original Finnish source) into their respective target language, Italian or Dutch. That additional maneuver is called a *relay*. Members would then receive the interpretation in Italian or Dutch a few seconds later than their colleagues who had received the interpretation without the additional mediation of the *relay*.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ Dutch and Italian Members who understand French, however, may choose to listen directly to the *retour* from the Finnish booth, either to avoid the additional delay or to hear the communication with one less mediation. The Members’ *right to choose* is another variable that complicates implementation of the system of the SI in the EP. Particularly with multilingual Members, or Members learning another language, wearing their headphones in and of itself does not identify which language they are listening to. One has to see the channel selection to determine if an MEP is listening to their state’s official language or another language in their repertoire.

Interpreter teams are referred to by their target language and the geographical booth in which they are located: the French booth, the Slovenian booth, etc. The actual booths are constructed in the exterior walls of each meeting room and are numbered, geographically, in sequence from left to right looking up at them from the front of the meeting space (where moderators are stationed facing the rest of the participants). Thus the interpreters are behind most of the users, separated by soundproof glass. Eye contact is possible if Members make the effort, but they usually do not. Each geographical booth number also corresponds to a language channel, e.g. the interpreter team working into the target language of English occupies the second geographical booth and channel 2. In this way, Members become accustomed to channel numbers corresponding with the languages that they listen to; this design is the same in every room and hemicycle. Everyone quickly learns that, for instance, French can be heard on channel 3 and Spanish on channel 8. (See Table 4.)

Table 4. Standardized Language Codes for Channels and Booths in the European Parliament

Language	English name	Language Code & Booth Name	Auditory Channel
български	Bulgarian	BG	20
español	Spanish	ES	8
čeština	Czech	CS	12
dansk	Danish	DA	6
Deutsch	German	DE	1
eesti keel	Estonian	ET	13
ελληνικά	Greek	EL	7
English	English	EN	2
français	French	FR	3
Gaeilge	Irish	GA	23
italiano	Italian	IT	4
latviešu valoda	Latvian	LV	14
lietuvių kalba	Lithuanian	LI	15
magyar	Hungarian	MG	16
Malti	Maltese	MT	22
Nederlands	Dutch	NL	5
polski	Polish	PL	17
português	Portuguese	PT	9
română	Romanian	RO	21
slovenčina (slovenský jazyk)	Slovak	SK	19
slovenščina (slovenski jezik)	Slovenian	SL	18
suomi	Finnish	SU	10
svenska	Swedish	SV	11

These codes are from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). They are used for simultaneous interpretation of official languages of EU Member States in all the European institutions.

Source: Interinstitutional style guide, European Union.

<http://publications.europa.eu/code/pdf/370000en.htm> Retrieved 22 March 2013.

4.1.2.1 Scene: Controlled Multilingualism

In the EP's sixth term, beginning in 2003-2004, controlled multilingualism essentially extended the Finnish exception to the exotic languages from Eastern Europe that were relatively unknown by the established cadre of EPIs. The new EPIs coming in with the new MEPs were, in many cases, already trained to operate within a different regime than the experienced EPIs from pre-enlargement. The new EPIs understood, for example, that they may often be expected to perform *retour*, that is, to work in both 'directions' *into* and *out of* their "A" language. Meanwhile, both old and new EPIs had to provide and work with intermediary *relay* interpretations to an unprecedented degree.¹⁵⁴ Gazzola describes controlled multilingualism as "based on the systematic adoption of management correctives" (2006, p. 402). These correctives include the asymmetric solutions of *retour* and *relay* described above. These asymmetries introduce two

¹⁵⁴ In fact, the definition of an "A" language may be in the process of change. Historically, the divide was between "active" (A) and "passive" (B, C) languages, and interpreters only worked into their active languages. The Finnish exception demonstrated that interpreters could also work out of one "active" language into another (previously-labeled) "passive" language. The definitions for "A" "B" and "C" languages posted in footnote 113 (immediately preceding) represents the historic hard line between "A" and "B" languages, while the definitions from the official professional organization for interpreters, the AIIC: "**Active languages: A :** The interpreter's native language (or another language strictly equivalent to a native language), into which the interpreter works from all her or his other languages in both modes of interpretation, simultaneous and consecutive. All members must have at least one 'A' language but may have more than one. **B :** A language other than the interpreter's native language, of which she or he has a perfect command and into which she or he works from one or more of her or his other languages. Some interpreters work into a 'B' language in only one of the two modes of interpretation. **Passive languages: C :** Languages, of which the interpreter has a complete understanding and from which she or he works." http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/what-is-conference-interpreting/language-combination/index_en.htm European Commission: The conference interpreter's language combination, retrieved 17 June 2012, Last update: 14/03/2012.

additional communication variables to the system of SI in the EP: 1) the number of language renditions generated by interpreters 2) alters the listening/receiving stream of interpretee experience in the dimension of time. In the current EP, while some interpretees are communicating at the pace of direct interpretation (e.g., Finnish-French and Portuguese-German), others are (sometimes) communicating at the pace of Finnish-English-Slovakian or Lithuanian-German-Polish interpretation.

4.1.2.2 Interpreter Criticism: Danger & Loss

Following Hymes (1962, 1974) interpreters are primary participants in the intercultural communication scene of intercultural, interpreted communication. Noticing and exploring these variables of rate/pacing and degree-of-interpreter-mediation as **communication** variables is a disciplinary move: “We understand communication insofar as we are able to build models or representations of this process” (Carey 1999, p. 31). What captured my attention in the criticism of EP Interpreters during the spring of 2004 was how unhappy they were with the MEPs choosing not to speak in their official (national) language (presumed, in most cases, to be the MEPs’ mother tongue). Instead, MEPs were trying to communicate more directly with other MEPs by making their points in a language they were still learning, usually English, sometimes French, and occasionally German or another identified shared language. (For instance, Russian was known to most MEPs from eastern Europe but would only be used in private if no other options could be found. This seemed to have more to do with Russian as a language of colonization than the fact that it is not a language of the EU.)

The prevalence of what interpreters (and, later, MEPs and other interview subjects) called “badly spoken languages (EPI #4)” (Kent, 2007, p. 63)¹⁵⁵ elicited very strong reactions from interpreters: “The English that we have to translate from is second or third language English - from people who do not *think* in that language (EPI #8)” (p. 66). EPIs identified three dangers and several losses associated with speaking inadequate/non-fluent English (Kent, 2007).

The dangers of using a less fluent language instead of a more fluent language (from the EPIs’ perspective) are that interpretees (the MEPs)

- 1 may not know what they are saying and/or
- 2 are unaware of the full implications of what they’re saying, which could
- 3 result in interpreters interpreting something other than what the MEP intends.

I was eager to return in 2009 and discover if the MEPs experienced a sense of danger, and, if so, how and for what reasons?

The losses vexing interpreters at the Parliament are both cultural and political. Culturally, there are losses of nuance, cultural specificity, and a diversity of worldviews. Politically, MEPs might “lose very important points, or a debate (EPI #7)” (Kent, 2007, p. 64), be unaware of communication breaking down (p. 65), or face “misunderstandings, embarrassment, or no reaction at all, when the speaker obviously would like some reaction from the audience (EPI #13)” (p. 65). These reactions from EPIs came at the end

¹⁵⁵ The code EPI (European Parliament Interpreter) and numbering system are associated with preliminary fieldwork at the Parliament in 2005, published in 2007 as “A Discourse of Danger and Loss: Interpreters on Interpreting in the European Parliament” (Kent, 2007). Most of that chapter is reprinted here with permission of the publisher.

of a tumultuous year, the first year of formal implementation of controlled multilingualism with its greatly increased language regime. The key (following Hymes, 1962, 1974) of conversational interviews waxed and waned between frustration and exhilaration. These interpreters had performed durably under great stress. Their discourse is an important summary of the growing pains of the EP's language regime as an instrument of intercultural communication for European governance.

4.1.3 Instrument and Key: Evolution of the SI Regime

Although both training and practice had been underway in the preceding term, in the span of a summer break the interpreting regime went from 110 language combinations to 462 (twenty-two of the twenty-three official languages simultaneously-interpreted in meetings everyday; minus Maltese because a minimum corps of trained interpreters was not yet established). The average size of interpreting teams was increased from three to four interpreters per booth. All of the interpreters in a booth are “poised for which language combination is called for” by the language choice of Members speaking from the floor (EPI53). *Retour* and *relay* became common rather than exceptional. The logistics of scheduling when and where interpreters were needed (given the range and scope of different meetings at various levels in the legislating process) were stretched to extremes. Old school interpreters bemoaned the loss of institutional camaraderie with the massive influx of unfamiliar faces, wondering at the audacity of their new eastern European colleagues, many (if not most) of whom were school-trained rather than having grown up multilingual. The few permanent EP staff that I was able to talk with at that time were cynical about the interpreters' criticism, dismissing it as a basic concern with future employment. I had to wait until 2008 to discover MEPs views.

The pitch (Hymes “key,” 1962) of the European Parliament Interpreters (EPIs) 2005 discourse clearly indicated that the dynamics of the system of SI in the EP were in tremendous flux. The sense of urgency directed my attention to the social interactions of Members, and to questions about the shared culture and identities being created through the ritual uses of SI in the EP. When I returned in 2008-2009 at the end of this term, four years after the initial (2005) conversations with EPIs, it had become clear that the administrative regime of controlled multilingualism was being challenged by an emergent plurilingualism in which Members use multiple and mixed languages in addition to the services of simultaneous interpreters.¹⁵⁶ The term, plurilingualism, comes from the European Commission, which directs language policy for the European Union overall. The Commission distinguishes plurilingualism from multilingualism but allows the term multilingualism to encompass both meanings. In the general discourse (EPIs, MEPs, career/permanent staff of the EP), no one uses the term plurilingualism. Multilingualism is posed against monolingualism. These concepts will be further defined and evaluated after the research findings are presented.

4.2 Primary Participants: MEPs on SI in the EP

Europe has given minority nations such as Catalonia the multitiered identity that is the best hope for solving language conflict: Miguel was Catalan, Spanish, European, and internationalist, all at the same time, and so calmly that he hadn’t even really thought about it. He seemed to find my eager questions kind of odd. Europe has made such diversity work and flexibility banal. It may be expensive, but it works. (Robert Lane Greene, 2011, p. 275)

¹⁵⁶ Cecilia Wadensjö (1998, p. 12) has already argued “that interpreter-mediated encounters are not comparable with monolingual ones but rather form a different genre subject to different considerations” (Ortega Herráez *et al.*, 2009, p. 152).

4.2.1 Mission Impossible

Criticisms of interpreting and interpreters by MEPs (and, in some cases, their assistants) are uniform regardless of the setting: as described above, the differentiation between the conference microphone system and the interpretation system are not evident in MEP discourse about SI in the EP. This lack of differentiation also applies to praising the interpreters and the system of SI, which occurs in both in genuine and obligatory terms. Rhetoric justifying the use and presence of interpreters appears throughout the interviews (which I prefer to call conversations as I did not hold to a pre-established framework or insist on consistency in questioning).¹⁵⁷

The frequent repetition of certain phrases suggested the routine incorporation of rhetoric generated for European publics (touched upon above). Sometimes these were delivered in what I took to be sincere belief and sometimes the stock phrases were double-voiced (Bakhtin, 1986), that is, they were delivered with an implied or explicit commentary acknowledging the statement as public relations. In other words, some MEPs (and a few of the interpreters in the earlier phase of research) talked with me as if I was a conduit for public relations directed toward an intended audience of European citizens in the general public who must be convinced of the value of this elaborate version of multilingualism. The routine consistency of this rhetoric enabled the identification of discourse themes and served as a reference point to distinguish more

¹⁵⁷ Maintaining such an open, exploratory stance is characteristic of action research, and particularly action learning. See previous footnote (##). My presence as a researcher was not specifically sanctioned by the Interpreting Directorate of the EP, so the emphasis is on action learning rather than on collaborative action research. In the traditional sense of action research, those responsible for the interpreting regime would have directly engaged and supported the research project.

thoughtful considerations of the diverse and potentially productive outcomes of intercultural communication using simultaneous interpretation.

“Interpreters,” explained one MEP, “are professional people. They do sort of a mission impossible job, and there’s a limit of to how much of the message they can bring out” (NM74). Despite this limit, many, if not most of the MEPs who talked with me agreed that there are times that they would be better and more effective if they had interpreting. The challenges of effectively expressing oneself lead to different dilemmas than the challenges of understanding others. Both dilemmas hold for monolingual as well as multilingual Members (see Tables 5 and 6 for participant demographics).

Table 5. Languages Known by Participating MEPs

Languages known by participating MEPs			
1.	Bulgarian	17.	Kiswahili
2.	Cypriot dialect	18.	Latin
3.	Chinese	19.	Latvian
4.	Czech	20.	Lithuanian
5.	Danish	21.	Luxembourgese
6.	Dutch (Nederlands)	22.	Maltese
7.	Estonian	23.	Norwegian
8.	English	24.	Polish
9.	Finnish	25.	Portuguese
10.	Flemish (Belgium)	26.	Romanian
11.	French	27.	Russian
12.	Gaelic (Irish)	28.	Slovakian
13.	German	29.	Slovenian
14.	Greek	30.	Spanish
15.	Hungarian	31.	Swedish
16.	Italian	32.	Turkish

4.2.2 Findings: Varied Competence of MEPs as Users of SI

By the time I returned in 2008, the new regime of controlled multilingualism had reached “full cruising speed” (Gazzola, 2006, p. 400). There was only one bad English speaker¹⁵⁸ that I heard in 2008-2009; his colleagues understood that “he is making a gesture, and so we understand that” (OM44).¹⁵⁹ Several Members said that problems with inexperienced interpreters that had vexed them in the beginning of the term (e.g., 2004-2005) had improved.

Interpretation, it will change. So the [eastern European language] was really, really weak at the beginning, which was normal, because the human source was not enough, so they would change Committees. And, of course, they could not be involved into the terms, you know, of the daily use. They could not daily use the same terms, you know? And plus the interpreter, for example, the legal first, they are not lawyers, so, sometimes, of course, you get very fast and they don't know what they are speaking about, so basically they used the wrong terms...[now] it's much better. So, now, more and more often I use it. (F53)¹⁶⁰

The learning curve for new interpreters to the Parliament is steep. According to Duflou (in progress), new interpreters to the European Parliament must acquire situated

¹⁵⁸ The label, “bad English speaker,” was in common parlance at the EP during both research periods (May-June 2005 and September 2008-July 2009).

¹⁵⁹ I approached this so-called ‘bad English speaking’ Member twice. I asked a second time because at least three people insisted that I really should talk with him. During the earlier research period, many Members spoke English nearly as incomprehensibly as this Member, but they had either been discouraged from using English as a *Lingua Franca*, or had improved their skill.

¹⁶⁰ Remember the key points of criticism from the interpreters at that time (about the MEPs’ delivery and production of the source language): speed and badly-spoken languages (see page XXX, this dissertation). Without too much of a stretch, the use of ‘wrong words’ by the interpreters is a mirror of the use of wrong words by Members speaking non-fluent languages. The admission of “get[ting] very fast” corroborates Parliament interpreter’s concern with speed.

competence. “The intensive learning process beginning EU interpreters go through cannot be considered as a mere continuation of their formal training as interpreting students” (Duflou, dissertation in progress). Specifically

[European Parliament interpreting] beginners...need to acquire a broad range of new, practice-related, i.e. to a large extent context specific, knowledge and skills in order to become competent practitioners...[and this] professional competence is not exclusively cognitive in nature, but includes a strong sensory, embodied as well as a social component. (Duflou, Chapter 5)

Further, she describes the “shared framework conditions” due to “the specificities of the historical, organizational and material context in which EU interpreters work” (ibid).

Some of those conditions will be explored in the next chapter.

It is clear that that the pressure of the new regime was most felt by the new MEPs from new Member States, who were working with interpreters new to the Parliament. Although also pressured, the situation was quite different for existing and experienced MEPs from old Member States, some of whom have had, e.g., “the same interpreters for nine years, yes...we know each other” (OM36).

Both old Members from established Member States and new Members from new Member States complained. Some Assistants who booked appointments with me to meet with their MEP (or, in a few cases, with themselves in lieu of their MEP) told me they arranged the interview precisely so I “could improve the quality of the interpretation” (F15/OM18).¹⁶¹ All of the MEPs who spoke with me volunteered, hence compose a self-selected sample and are thus not necessarily representative of the entire body.

¹⁶¹ Double coding, such as F15/OM18, indicate an Assistant interviewed on behalf of their MEP (in this case from an “old” Member State) and therefore representing their MEPs’ views rather than their own.

Statistically, participating MEPs represented ten percent (55/785) of the elected Members. Several Members allowed me second and third conversations and invited me into observations of Committees, Political Groups and working groups at various levels. The corpus includes 35 additional interviews with career staff of the Parliament, and a few interpreters (some of whom had given interviews in 2004 and some whom had not). At least one Member from every member State was interviewed (in two cases, an Assistant represented their MEP).

One MEP, who was recommended to me frequently as a person I should speak with (and whom I observed using occasionally undecipherable English), turned me down twice, insisting: “There are more important problems than language” (NM75). An MEP who did meet with me also expressed the perspective that the fact of so many different languages “is not a very ... important problem...[only] marginal” (OM29). This could be taken as evidence that the system of SI in the EP is functioning quite well. A limitation of the research is that I was generally prohibited from talking with Members who were not able to converse with me in English. “There are two types of Members,” one MEP told me: “Those that know languages, and those that don’t.” (NM28). In practical terms, although bilingual, my second language is not a European language so I conducted the research as if monolingual.

Table 6. Interviewee Demographics

Interview Demographics of participating Members of the European Parliament*	
#of MEPs interviewed	51
#of Assistants interviewed on behalf of their MEP	4
% of total MEPs (575 in the 6 th Term, 2004-2009)	10%
#of MEPs interviewed with lay interpretation by an Assistant	11
#of MEPs interviewed with professional interpretation	2
#of MEPs interviewed two times	22
#of MEPs interviewed three times	8
#of languages known or partially known by MEPs (range)	1 – 8
Average number of languages known or partially known by participating MEPs	4 ½
#of participating MEPs from “old” EU member nations* [coded OM]	34
#of participating MEPs from “new” EU member nations** [coded NM]	21
#of participating MEPs who are women	10 (18%)
#of participating MEPs who are men	45 (82%)
Age range of participating MEPs	33-76
Aged 30-39=2; 40-49=7; 50-59=14; 60-69=14; 70-79=2	
Median age of participating MEPs	57
Range of terms served as a MEP	1-4
1st term=32 MEPs; 2 nd term = 11 MEPs; 3 rd term = 8 MEPs; 4 th term = 3 MEPs	
Median #of terms served as a MEP	1.7
<i>*Includes a Vice-President, a Quaestor, Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees & Political Groups, Rapporteurs and Shadow Rapporteurs of Working Groups as well as Members not in these leadership positions.</i>	

Interviews with others (no demographic data collected)	
#of non-MEPs interviewed or overheard*** in 2008-2009 (including interpreters)****	35
#of European Parliament Interpreters (EPIs) interviewed in 2005	65

**Member before “the big bang enlargement” of 2004, typically of western Europe.*

***Became a Member during “the big bang enlargement” of 2004, typically of eastern Europe.*

****Occasionally during observations an insightful or revealing comment would be said by a stranger sitting near me.*

*****Includes two administrators from the Directorate General on Conferences and Interpreting, two Heads of Booth (i.e., managers for each language’s team of simultaneous interpreters), an interpreter trainer, several administrative assistants representing themselves, a few visitors and interns, some technicians and a handful or more of permanent officials associated with various Secretariats.*

My knowledge of American Sign Language and work as a professional sign language interpreter was intriguing to some Members but not most. As it was, I did not have the personal resources to hire interpreters, and the EP's rules are designed to prevent interpreting outside of the formalized structure of controlled multilingualism and its designated contexts of use. This structural feature of the system of SI in the EP is being extended through a new program called *Ad Personam* interpreting, which was in its first experimental year of operation in 2008-2009. However, despite using only a fraction of its allotted budget in the first year of operation (NM70), those funds were not authorized to support this research. Requests for an exception were disregarded. In a handful of cases, an MEP not fluent in English was motivated enough to talk with me that they did arrange interpretation either through one of their Assistants or an EP Interpreter who volunteered to work off-the-record.

I was interested in MEPs' ideas about the system of SI in the EP: their criticisms, what they thought SI was good for and when, and how deliberately they considered themselves users or participants in a special kind of intercultural communication. I also wondered if MEPs are able to secure SI when they need it, what are the conditions when they believed they need SI instead of using a shared language, and the extent to which they consider SI an important mode of cultural production. Contrary to the field of community interpreting, where a discourse about users' lack of knowledge is pervasive MEPs demonstrate a sophisticated range of considerations and consciousness regarding strategies and purposes of using simultaneous interpretation. See Table 7.

4.2.2.1 MEPs Strategies: Language Choice and Simultaneous Interpreting

Table 7. MEPs Language Choices and Strategies When Addressing Other MEPs

Scenario	Same or different official language?	Language choice	Communicative Strategy
A	We speak the same official language.	Our official language.	In order to articulate ideas precisely; neither has communicative advantage.
B	We speak different official languages: I know more of their language than they know of mine, or we both know some of each other's language.	I speak some words in his/her language (as a greeting or warm-up) then switch to my official language (for the substance).	To flatter them; to establish rapport; to make them more amenable to compromise.
C	We speak different official languages; I am fluent in theirs, they are not fluent in mine.	I negotiate in their language.	They may be overconfident because I am negotiating in my second language; I sometimes win important points.
D	We speak different official languages and are mutually fluent in each other's language.	We negotiate in either language.	There is no communicative advantage in the language choice.
E	We speak different official languages and are equitably fluent in a shared non-native language.	We use the shared language.	There is no communicative advantage in the language choice.
F	We speak different official languages: I am not fluent in theirs but no interpretation is provided for the language combination.	I negotiate in their/another language, to the best of my ability. Sometimes I win, but often I am frustrated that I have not been able to fully articulate my ideas or positions.	I am disadvantaged but I have no choice except to make the best of it.
G	We speak different official languages and are not fluent in a shared language, but interpretation is provided.	We both use the same medium of simultaneous interpretation.	In order to articulate ideas precisely; neither has communicative advantage.

An intermediate version of this table appears in Kent (2012, reprinted with permission). The original was shared in a memo to the President of the European Parliament in 2009. See Appendix A.

4.2.2.2 Strategic Use and Non-Use of Simultaneous Interpretation

Clever people, thinking hard, can often circumvent the constraints of value-laden language, but such ingenuity requires recognition first, that the constraints exist, followed by hard thought on how to get around them. To accept them is to chain the imagination. To ignore them or to run at them headlong is to invite frustration. (Neustadt and May, 1986, p. 206)

4.2.2.2.1 Avoidance of Being Interpreted: Rhetorical Uses of a Shared Language

Table 7 charts an emergent categorization of MEPs' consciousness about language difference and the choice to use SI or a shared language. Some Members are highly attuned to each other's language profiles and alert to the advantages of being able to utter even a few words in their interpreter's language. Members with more experience in the EP, that is, Members from old Member States who had served in one or more previous terms, were able to use both a 'dominant' and 'non-dominant' language position to their advantage. For instance, in scenario B and C, a low level of fluency in the other MEP's language is used to soften them up, and a high level of fluency in the other MEP's language is used to play up their confidence.

Whether (or how soon) this same-language tactic is recognized by new/more recently elected MEPs is an open question. Some Members ignore it: "I don't have a problem, why should I care," challenged one English-fluent MEP (NM25), asserting that his specialization was separate from social culture. Some simply move to the most fluent shared language without questioning it. "For me," explained one Assistant to a Hungarian MEP, "I work in German as well with all my German colleague, which is funny, because they have a good English, but they know I have a good German" (F53). Others, "try for the better meaning . . . bringing in words [so that] we can create a common expression...a common cultural expression" (OM23).

4.2.2.2.2 Avoidance of Interpreting: Communicative Equality with a lingua franca

When MEPs are equally fluent in each other's language or another shared language, scenarios D and E, there is no language-based communicative advantage. This is not to say that individual MEPs may be more or less skilled at negotiating, but they are not able to increase that leverage through language knowledge. The other scenarios in which no communicative advantage is achieved through language knowledge is when both/all Members speak the same official language with native fluency (scenario A), or when both are using the system of simultaneous interpretation (scenario G). Because it is naturalized, Scenario A is the baseline for assessing all of the other language choice strategies. Arguably, another scenario (not represented in the chart) of communicative equity involves Members speaking their mother tongues (an 'active' use in the jargon) and listening to another language that they understand (a 'passive' use).¹⁶²

There is so-called inter-institution negotiation [e.g., a Trialogue] when you get a big package...and...you start negotiate with the Council. And under the French presidency, of course, they were pushed. Then all person who was involved in French presidency, they had to speak in French, which was funny. Because when we sat down to negotiate, he spoke in French and then we answered in English. And then, after a while, we change into English. I mean he change into English, because we said, okay, go ahead in French. We get it. But we answer in English, because we are sure in English. (F53)

That particular scenario took place without interpreting: French was 'passively' understood by the Members who spoke English as a foreign language (EFL); and English

¹⁶² Although this argument is not crafted, there are compelling reasons and evidence provided to support this Member-defined use of the system of SI in the EP.

was ‘passively’ understood by the representatives of the French Presidency.¹⁶³ (It is asserted by MEPs that Members “must understand [French] but to speak [it] is not so [necessary]” (OM23). In the case being described with the French Presidency, two different languages were spoken and both languages were listened to by participants in those meetings without interpretation.

Such language jockeying is taken as part of the institutional culture.

There was a fight between me and [the Chairperson of our political Group]. He always “why don’t—you know, your flat French and your English is very positive is very good”...he’s always laughing at me. “Why do you use your mother tongue, your barbaric language?” (OM09)

Both French and English were foreign, learned languages for this particular MEP, who routinely spoke his mother tongue/official language in all meetings that included simultaneous interpretation. Openly admitting and sharing the pleasure of teasing each other about language fluencies was reported much more rarely than accusations of posturing.¹⁶⁴

They cannot press you that you speak French, you know? You find a common language. And there was no interpretation. But if not Mr [MEP], who has such a good English, and understand French, then we ask for interpretation....But could be a situation, so, for example, if the Czech presidency and they decide to speak Czech, then we need it. So it could happen. But it’s a funny things. No one would come to an idea. Then on such level, the Czech presidency, one of the, of the person of a low level

¹⁶³ In the jargon of interpreters, this ‘passive’ understanding corresponds with a “C” language, one that is understood enough to make a rendition into a more fluent “B” or “A” language.

¹⁶⁴ Someone, however, should be able to make a tremendously fun study of the humor of multilingualism and use of interpreters throughout the history of the Parliament. Space and scope prevent due consideration here, but stories and jokes abound. One historical anecdote involved some MEPs inventing a species of fish as a spoof on the interpreters working the Committee on Fisheries (PECH).

say, okay, I don't speak French. We have to speak Czech, so go ahead, solve the problem. But the French, they did like this. (F53)

In other words, the French (in the instance described above) insisted on performing their French identity through speaking French, regardless of the access issues it caused for other Members. There are always “two factors,” explained an administrator for the Interpreting Directorate: “catering for convenience...and a political factor. Using a language is a political statement” (F14).

4.2.2.2.3 Proactive Use of Simultaneous Interpretation: Communicative Equality

The other relevant condition in which communicative equality is achieved is when both/all MEPs use the system of SI in the EP (scenario G). This equalizing characteristic of the system, however, is less well represented in the discourse. Separating genuine appreciation from the official rhetoric is a matter for a more subtle analysis than is conducted here. The system of SI in the EP seems reluctantly tolerated and frequently criticized. Rather than articulating a field of equality (Sen, 1992) that can be generated by the skillful and strategic use of SI, public rhetoric about multilingualism promotes statements about transparency and democracy that the social practice of participating in simultaneous interpretation does not consistently deliver. For instance, when asked whether one knows if another Member is using the SI system to make a political statement about identity (perhaps the most common accusation) or to make themselves better understood, most MEPs admit, “I don't know” (e.g., NM26). One Assistant described the situation for himself and his MEP:

He and me, we use [the SI] when, pfff, I don't know, when you get the risk to use it or you are so extremely tired. But to tell the truth, sometimes, easier to use English or German - my German is the first language -

because you work in English. And then, sometimes, I know better the expression of this topic in English, because I work in - we write the amendments, we negotiate with the others, the colleagues, the administrators, so the common language is English. It could be the French as well, but not my boss neither me, it's not able. We read French, but we are not able to negotiate in French or make text in French. (F53)

4.2.2.2.4 Avoidance of Simultaneous Interpretation: Communicative Disadvantage

The dominant theme in the discourse privileges being able to communicate in the same language. This emphasis on language choice tends to mask another theme, represented in scenario F. "Some matters be held, for example, for committee meetings we have only one language is very bad" (NM70). When language difference is the baseline condition and SI is not provided, MEPs rely on their Assistants to mediate the communication on their behalf. Sometimes this takes the form of a kind of interpretation or translating which is regarded functional while acknowledged as non-professional. Sometimes MEPs simply are not able to participate, and are acutely aware that their participation is compromised.

On the last sitting of our committee...there are many, many amendments...and we had not interpreter. So I must to discuss about the amendment in English. For me it was very difficult because for this case, I think it is necessary to have interpreter because one level is to understand in the non-formal discussion. You must understand what every, every word, what is mean this amendment, what change in original text this amendment? (NM69)

Two things are interesting about this feedback: one is that interpreting is supposed to be guaranteed during Committee work. The second is the conundrum of forcing decisions when Members are unable to understand because of the failure to arrange a mechanism for securing interpretation when needed in any context of EP decision-making.

Structurally, “interpretation is given to bodies, not to MEPs” (F14). “Bodies” in this use are not human individuals, but the various groups composing the institutional infrastructure: Committees, Groups, Plenary are interpreted, while working groups of most types are not (unless the Rapporteur has enough status or need to make the request). The point is, individuals do not have a blanket right to interpretation in the European Parliament, rather the setting has precedence, and the status associated with one’s role in that meeting may, secondarily, afford more or less claim on interpretation services.

There are additional restrictions on the provision of interpreting enumerated in the Parliament’s Rules of Procedure: Rule 81.4a (implementing measures during a “time of scrutiny” which refers to voluntary agreements between Member States), Rule 90.3 (recommendations related to foreign and security policy), Rule 139 (regarding provision of interpreters during the transition to the larger interpreting regime) and Rule 179.7 (involving Committees of Inquiry).¹⁶⁵ An italicized section of the security rule exception reiterates the primary of Rule 138 (guaranteeing the provision of interpretation) while clarifying that decisions will be made whether or not all Members understand:

The non-application of Rule 138 is possible only in committee and only in urgent cases. Neither at committee meetings not declared to be urgent nor in plenary sitting may there be any departure from the provisions of Rule 138.

The provision stating that oral amendments shall be admissible means that members may not object to oral amendments being put to the vote in committee.

It is *possible* that the Member’s expressed frustration may have occurred under one of the special conditions of Rules 81, 90 or 179 but the scope of the conversation at the time

¹⁶⁵ The relevant portions of these Rules are provided in Appendix C.

involved the division of formal and informal settings. More likely, this type of situation results from the continuation of Rule 139, which provided that “in applying Rule 138, account shall be taken, with regard to...the availability in real terms and sufficient numbers of the requisite interpreters and translators” (ibid).¹⁶⁶ However, the context in which the MEP shared the anecdote was to illustrate the frequently made point that “The places where you need interpreting most are the places where you are least likely to receive it” (e.g., NM27).

Another Member gives an example of a similar problem that can occur in Committees even when interpretation is provided.

I started speaking English instead of Dutch...I didn't have any Dutch text in front of me, so I had to rely on the the English...I had tabled that amendment in English...I added this as an extra argument...but not as an excluding argument...I read over that when I read the English—when I drafted the English text, because my English is okay, but I'm not a native English speaker...So, in fact, this was a language problem...because the spirit of my amendment was certainly not to put it as an extra condition...if I would have tabled that in Dutch, the services would have translated that into correct English or in the right spirit of English.
(OM09)

This Member discovered a downside to working in a lingua franca, despite its apparent convenience. Adding “an extra argument” or “an excluding argument” entail different political maneuvers, they call for quite different responses from colleagues and opponents. As much time as is (supposedly) wasted in correcting interpreters' errors, an

¹⁶⁶ There is, in fact, a constant call for interpreters to build the corps sufficiently to meet demand. Anti-interpreter rhetoric, stressful working conditions and relatively low or unreliable pay (speaking generically for all kinds of interpreting in all settings) currently exacerbate pressures regarding this career choice. Arguably, the EU's emphasis on language learning competes with promoting the skill of communicating effectively by knowing how to work interpreters well.

equal or greater share of that (supposedly) lost time must be spent trying to un-do simple syntactical errors of non-fluent language users. “Simultaneous translation [sic] creates problems, but it is astonishing that the number of real blunders is that low” (OM03).

4.2.3 Primary Participants: Two ‘Sides’ of a Unified Discourse

As mentioned previously, findings from a preliminary round of research with European Parliament Interpreters (EPIs) about the system of simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament were previously published (Kent, in Hale, Ozolins and Stern 2009). During the submission and revision process an anonymous reviewer succinctly summarized the function of that chapter in a volume on community (not conference) interpreting:

It gives voice to the interpreters’ attitudes and frustrations. They express fears concerning democracy and efficiency in policymaking, identified as grounded in a linguistic problem, more precisely in the choice of the members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to restrain from utilising the interpreters’ services and rather speak in a foreign lingua franca. (email correspondence, Sandra Hale, Mar 5, 2009)

The matter of voice *for the interpreters* is an extension of the desire for voice that appears to underlie the reasons that MEPs choose a shared language or lingua franca when possible. Table 7 shows that MEPs are motivated more by a desire for rhetorical influence than by communicative equality, but EPIs observations (at the beginning of the term, when there were almost as many new MEPs as there were new EPIs) centered around their observations of MEP failure to achieve voice.

4.2.3.1 Interpreters on Interpreting for the European Parliament

“I’m talking about the magic of language that’s being killed.” (EP Interpreter #3)

Much of the EP interpreters’ discourse mirrors the European Union’s public rhetoric about democracy and equality. Many interpreters are aware of criticisms that interpretation is merely symbolic and/or too expensive. It is of pragmatic professional as well as theoretical interest that conference interpreters, like community interpreters, have not yet generated proactive arguments as to the immediate and long-term value of simultaneous interpretation. The following re-constructed discourse summarizes a specific EP interpreter concern about language use that appeared in nearly every interview: whether MEPs choose to use their best expressive language or to speak less fluently via a lingua franca. Every quotation in this section is from a professional interpreter for the European Parliament during the spring of 2005, which was several months into the first year of the ‘big bang’ enlargement. Their descriptions and explanations are eloquent, requiring minimal exposition and spare commentary. Each of the selected quotations is a complement to similar sentiments; together they compose a compelling discourse about the choice of monolingualism (the use of a presumably shared language) over multilingualism (the collaborative use of many languages).

Interpreters for the European Parliament consistently and regularly complain about speakers’ reading of prepared texts. “The difficulty here is...speed and badly spoken languages” (EPI #4). Comments range from critique of the delivery (fast reading of prepared text) to doubt regarding intention (such as MEPs seeking to say something without actually communicating anything meaningful). Mentioned by the majority of EP interpreters, the problems with MEPs’ speed-reading-as-talk was not accompanied by as

much frustration as MEPs' lack of fluency in a lingua franca. "It's Globe-ish again. It's bad English. It's sometimes bad French" (EPI #2). The general view is represented by this interpreter's comment: "People are getting used to a lower level of quality and a kind of communication that relies on broken English" (EPI #8).

"The English-speaking look-alikes" (EPI #9) are described by interpreters in detail:

It's not as if it's English spoken by Englishmen. That's one kind of English, but...it's mainly another kind of...Pidgin English that's spoken by...non-natives. Many of the new Member States have sometimes a very proximate knowledge of English and that makes for a completely different kind of English, a kind of jargon. Sometimes they don't know the value of certain words or expressions, and that's a danger. (EPI #6)

The sentiment of danger was common among EP interpreters, because "you're not really sure they know what they're saying" (EPI #6). Consequently, the output from interpreters into the target language "might be slightly different. It might not be exactly what the speaker is trying to say. Obviously you aren't doing this on purpose, but are desperately trying to understand something and then say something in the target language" (EPI #13). These three dangers arise repeatedly in the discourse of interpreters for the European Parliament:

- interpretees possibly *not knowing what* they are saying,
- interpretees being *unaware of* the full range of *implications* of what they are saying, and of
- interpreters inadvertently saying something *other than* what the speaker *intended*.

Accompanying the risks of reduced understanding and actual misunderstanding, many interpreters also talk about a related loss. "You lose the implications of what they say, the turns of phrase that indicate that something special is going on" (EPI #8). What

that “something special” might be was described primarily along the dimension of national culture. “The fact that a Greek tells you something, or a Swede tells you something, gets lost” (EPI #15). Interpreters do not mean the symbolic label or name of the nation; rather, they are referring to something ineffable, a subtle yet distinct quality of mind:

When you speak a language, you implicitly accept the categories of that language. What you can express is limited by the categories that exist in that language. That means you might find yourself in a position where your political discourse is dictated by what is accepted, what is fashionable or not fashionable in a given language. For example, the Anglo-Saxon way of expressing yourself carries with it a certain perception of the world. When a Lithuanian or a Greek or a Portuguese uses English, in some way I think they are giving up part of their world and replacing it with a sort of internationalized sort of worldview. (EPI #8)

Comments about the relationship between language and meaning appear frequently throughout the interview transcripts. Usually the naming of variation in worldview is accompanied by a tone of grief (sometimes articulated, sometimes implied), a Hymesian key ranging from sorrow to desolation that the scope of meaningfulness possible from the interactions of these cultural differences is being reduced to a single, flat mode of interacting. At the same time, some interpreters try to argue in support of MEPs’ use of a lingua franca instead of simultaneous interpretation:

If everybody has a lingua franca where there are no advantages or privileged positions among the speakers, then why should they use interpreters? But that is also never the case. You always have someone who speaks native, mother tongue whereas others are required to have this foreign language, and you don’t have this equality any more...If someone is struggling with the language you can lose very important points, or a debate. (EPI #7)

Likewise, native language speakers are not bothered by people speaking their language wrong because they know it’s not their mother tongue and they will try and understand and grasp the meaning of what the person who

is speaking is saying. I think that all the other people who share that language as a tool will not be bothered too much by the fact that that person speaks badly. I think the only people who are bothered by it are the interpreters because they actually hear where the communication breaks down once in a while. (EPI #3)

What do European Parliament interpreters mean by communication breakdowns?

The same issues are repeated with more specificity: “We see that [MEPs] lexicon is reduced by seventy or eighty percent when you venture into another language” (EPI #2), and “[MEPs] can’t tackle important things with their bad language” (EPI #14). These factors can lead to palpable problems, such as “misunderstandings, embarrassment, or no reaction at all, when the speaker obviously would like some reaction from the audience” (EPI #13). The frequency of such breakdowns is unclear from the current corpus of data, because while some interpreters observe such instances of breakdown only “once in a while” (EPI #3), others say, “We witness the contradictions every day – the mistakes – every day” (EPI #2).

At the time of these conversations (2005), I was nonplussed. Why does a norm of using a weak lingua franca instead of the fully-expressive rhetorical range of one’s best official language exist in a political context of international decision-making?

Parliament’s interpreters would speculate:

People tend to think better of themselves than they are. Then what happens is they decide to abandon their mother tongue and speak in one of the foreign languages because they think they know it, when they don’t know it, or [don’t] know it adequately. (EPI #10)

Some interpreters are also unwilling to pass ultimate judgment: “They have the impression to communicate better, but do they communicate better? I don’t know. It’s getting across general ideas, but the finesse, the nuances get completely lost” (EPI #4).

The key/tone of concern, with its implicit question of consequences, kept me asking more questions: what is being lost when a less-fluent language is used? What is being gained by this language choice? How much will the loss cost? What benefits accrue from what is gained?

If it's a Polish speaking bad English, I have no clue [what they mean].
And this is becoming part of our work more and more. The English that we have to translate from is second or third language English – from people who do not *think* in that language. (EPI #8)

If speakers are not fluent enough to think in the language they are using, “It’s like Finnish and English: you need to be a Finn to understand that kind of English” (EPI #1), or, “...a kind of Swenglish that will not be easily understood by the interpreters unless they have Swedish or Danish...because they won’t understand the structure behind or why they use certain words” (EPI #6). The combinations are myriad: “Unless you know Spanish grammar, [their English is] very difficult to follow” (EPI #5). The examples resonate with the Member who explained how he had erred in generating an “extra” or “excluding” argument.¹⁶⁷

In retrospect, it seems that interpreters were observing (and objecting to) language users in the European Parliament converging to a monotone form of English. Interpreters described this movement toward lingua francas (especially English) and away from their best language in a key of regret. “The nuances are lost and everybody gets to something grey. The passion is lost. It becomes more generalized because that’s all you can say in

¹⁶⁷ Sometimes this happens in community interpreting contexts, where the minority language speaker adopts false cognates from the mainstream language, causing confusion for the interpreter. For example, when a Spanish speaker uses the term ‘asalto’, it can be unclear to the interpreter working into English whether they intend ‘assault’ as a general category or the specifically Spanish meaning of ‘armed robbery’ (Hale, 2004). Another example from a workshop presentation by Cecilia Wadensjö (Critical Link 5, 2007, Sydney Australia) involved Russian and the perfective/imperfective verb form. Second language users can generate a grammatical conflict with unidiomatic uses that “obscures the meaning.”

that kind of language” (EPI #3). Not only is the content and complexity of conversation reduced, but “people pretend that they understand and they don’t. Because they’re too embarrassed to admit they don’t know English” (EPI #2). Interpreters find “it’s difficult to say [to an MEP], ‘Look, don’t speak English anymore” (EPI #1). “Trying to do so? It’s very, very delicate...” (EPI #6).

Interpreters agree with the democratic principle that language choice is an actual and legitimate right: “You can’t stop people from speaking other languages. They’re quite proud about it” (EPI #4). “Senior officials from Member States want to show off their language skills” (EPI #12). Such desires and pressures add up: “It’s very hard to tell them, ‘Look, with your English, you’re better to not speak it if you can’t say it” (EPI #1). When I finally began talking with MEPs about their point-of-view four years later, they claimed they were choosing English because of perceived weaknesses and problems with the interpretation.

MEPs’ concerns regarding the achievement of voice during interpreted communication is expressed in terms of “loss” and “risk.” These terms mirror and echo the concerns expressed by EP Interpreters. Table 8 compares the emergent themes of MEPs’ sense of loss and risk in using the system of simultaneous interpretation with the European Parliament interpreters’ corresponding perceptions of “danger” and “loss.”

Table 8. Comparison of Dangers, Risks, and Losses between Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and EP Interpreters (EPIs)

Dangers according to EPIs	Risks according to MEPs	Losses** according to EPIs	Losses according to MEPs
MEPs possibly not knowing what they are actually saying in non-fluent language.	Of not controlling the word choices made by interpreters when I speak in my official language rather than a language I share (to some extent) with colleagues.	Of a worldview and the categories implicit in that worldview.	Of control of meaning.
MEPs being unaware of the full range of implications of what they are saying in a non-fluent language.	Of not controlling the meanings made by interpreters when I speak in my official language rather than a language I share (to some extent) with colleagues.	Of implicit qualities of logic & understanding from each national/cultural, perspective.	Of control of meaning.
EPIs inadvertently saying something other than what the MEP intended when the MEP speaks in a non-fluent language.	Of the interpreter misunderstanding or misrepresenting my meaning when I speak in my official language rather than a language I share (to some extent) with colleagues.	Of continuity in the communication process.	Of speed and the sense of immediacy generated when using the same language as other MEPs.
Main Danger perceived by EPIs	Main Risk perceived by MEPs	Main Loss perceived by EPIs	Main Loss perceived by MEPs
The use of non-native languages by MEPs lacking native or near-native fluency.	Having to trust the interpreters.	National, linguistic, cultural diversity of thought and thoughtfulness.	Control.

***EP Interpreters refer to losses and dangers when MEPs choose against maximal utilization of the simultaneous interpreting system by speaking any language in which they are not fully fluent. The original version of this table was shared in a report submitted to the Bureau of the European Parliament (2009). See Appendix A.*

4.2.3.2 Loss, or Danger and Risk?

Reducing the discourse by primary participants about SI in the EP to the one term they share in common, it is “loss.” In this sense the Members and Interpreters mirror each other. The terms “risk” and “danger” are complementary. Here, these two sets of participants and their ‘sides’ of the discourse echo each other. The risk of losing control of meaning (as perceived by the MEPs in using the SI) complements the dangers of inadequate control of meaning (as perceived by the EPIs when MEPs do not use the SI). These perceived dangers and risks associated with (perceived) loss of control combine into an overall discourse of complaint. The repetition of the complaints generates general suspicion and distrust of simultaneous interpretation. This discursive atmosphere, along with direct experience, contributes to MEPs’ choices toward lingua francas and away from interpretation, reinforcing the concerns of EPIs who must still grapple with the source language, regardless of its dysfluency.

Although this was not explicitly stated by any of the interpreters who spoke with me, EP Interpreters also ‘lose control’ when interpretees speak in pidgin, English as a foreign language, or contact languages rather than in the idiomataic grammar of the official languages. As many interpreters explained, “your [bad language] still has to be interpreted!” (e.g., EPI #53). One could argue that EPIs’ frustration is as much with not understanding as MEPs’ frustration is with not being understood. In other words, discourse about the system of SI in the EP exposes the essence of all communication: the dual questions of a) what knowledge is being mutually comprehended, and b) what kinds of identities and relationships are being enacted.

The pervasive presence of these strongly-felt sentiments indicates the extent and depth to which *culture is being produced and shared* among these individuals who a) have different roles and responsibilities within the European Parliament, and b) come from diverse cultural backgrounds and linguistic profiles. Because the overall system of controlled multilingualism inhibits and discourages immediate feedback and corrective action (due to time pressure and the presumed invisibility of the machine), MEPs perceive a loss of control of their words and meanings.

This apparent powerlessness is both comparable and distinct from, say, the users of community-style interpreting such as patients in Australian hospitals who receive no professional interpretation services except from family or friends. As seen in Table 7, Scenario F, Members of the Parliament are often thrust into circumstances where they must simply make do. At other times, conditions and pressures of the settings (in the hemicycles, in the rooms) force a fast temporal rate. Members' attempts to pack meaning in dense source language deliveries guarantees the absence of some of the intended information in the target language (in particular, one minute speeches but also during debate). Because the overall system of controlled multilingualism is not differentiated in the discourse as anything other than one system, for one purpose, using SI is considered risky in many situations. MEPs find it preferable to utilize a language in which they are less fluent but which gives them the feeling of individual control rather than the less controllable, shared system of simultaneous interpretation.

4.2.4 Finding: Simultaneous Interpretation as Social Interaction

Virtually all of the Members I spoke with were multilingual (review Table 5). However, Members of the EP who are not fluent in other languages (especially English)

often find themselves in situations where communication is curtailed because interpreting is not provided for most of the smaller, face-to-face working meetings. “I usually speak in my language, but ... my second Committee¹⁶⁸ is Economic and Monetary Affairs and we have only three times, I don’t know, interpretation the last five years in this committees, not good” (NM70). The reasons why the lack of SI is “not good” affirm the criticisms provided by EP Interpreters when Members insist on a shared language even when SI is provided:

English is not my mother tongue so I would not pretend even that I could do the job in English all the time. Definitely, for example, on transport legislation which is very detailed, you really need your mother tongue to be clear on what you’re saying. (OM71)

This is not just an individualized problem of expression:

We have some problems with the English language because we are not native speakers, and when both are not native speakers it’s very difficult to have a good communication about a commission document, about amendments, and if you read some amendments it’s sometimes only one word to change. And that’s very difficult to have all the nuance in your own translation from Dutch to English and then from English to Spanish, Portuguese. (F10)

Specifically, “You must understand what every, every word, what is mean this amendment, what change in original text this amendment? This very difficult and for this case I think must be interpreter” (NM69). If the crux of the interpretation regime of

¹⁶⁸ In this case, the MEP was not able to ask for SI in both Committees because “the sessions are paralleled” and “you have to pick” which Committee to schedule the SI, even if you will be going back and forth between the two meetings (NM70). Also, one must be a full Member (not a Substitute, in most cases) in order to qualify for making a SI request.

controlled multilingualism is to respond to real demand, who defines what MEPs express as real need? And what are the implications if real need is not accommodated?¹⁶⁹

I was invited during the last few months of the legislative year to observe two different contexts in which SI was not provided, the Baltic Intergroup and the Asylum Dossier Horizontal Working Group. The Baltic Intergroup included many ELF speakers; the group would definitely have benefitted from the provision of interpreting. Although there was a great deal of pressure on the communication in the Baltic Intergroup meetings,¹⁷⁰ for reasons that will become clear, the analysis centers on the Asylum Dossier: a “package” of previously-passed legislation up for recast and a new initiative for establishing a European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

4.3 Working on the Asylum dossier

After the announcement of the Asylum dossier Working Group in the LIBE Committee, I observed two Horizontal Working Group meetings with the Shadows, six Trialogue meetings with representatives from the Council and/or Commission (one of which was “unofficial”), five Political Group meetings, three additional LIBE Committee

¹⁶⁹ “As described in the Code of Conduct, language facilities in Parliament shall be managed on the basis of the principles governing ‘controlled full multilingualism’. The resources to be devoted to multilingualism shall be controlled by means of management on the basis of users’ real needs, measures to make users more aware of their responsibilities and more effective planning of requests for language facilities” (Committee on Budgetary Control, 2013).

¹⁷⁰ Some Members of the Baltic Intergroup believed the permanent administration was trying to force them to discontinue meeting altogether. The status of Intergroups is liminal, as they are not part of the formal decision-making structure of the EP’s legislative work. However Members consider the work done in Intergroups to be an essential and necessary informal mechanism complementing the formal process.

meetings and three Plenaries when the Asylum dossier was on the agenda. I was also in the Plenary when the proposal was voted on by the entire Membership in the very last session of the Sixth Term. I interviewed each Rapporteur, Shadow Rapporteur and/or their Assistant(s), and some Secretariat staff (the bureaucratic administrations composed of permanent EP staff which maintains records and manages logistics during and between EP terms for the Committees and Groups). Throughout all the observations I was rarely introduced; only one MEP introduced me/my role to a Political Group—perhaps because the Independents were such a small group my presence would surely be noticed. In the other Groups and Committees, it was taken for granted that if I made it through the door I was allowed to be in the room.

Table 9. Asylum Dossier Meetings

The Asylum Dossier: Observed Meetings			
Setting and Date in 2009	“in the room” = interpretation system ¹⁷¹	“in the hemicycle” = operator system ¹⁷²	No SI provided
Civil Liberties Committee (LIBE) 17 Feb	X		
Dialogue (with Council) 3 March			X
Dialogue (with the Commission) 3 March			X
Dialogue (with the Commission & Council) 1 April			X
Plenary 2 April		X	
Horizontal Working Group 15 April			X
Unofficial Dialogue (with Council) 16 April			X
LIBE Coordinator’s Meeting 16 April	X		
LIBE 16 April	X		
EPP-ED Political Group debate 21 April	X		
Horizontal Working Group 22 April			X
LIBE 22 April	X		
IND-DEM Political Group debate 22 April	X		
Dialogue (Council & Commission) 23 April			X
Dialogue (Council & Commission) 28 April			X
Greens Political Group debate 28 April	X		
PSE Political Group debate 28 April	X		
EPP-ED Political Group debate 28 April	X		
Plenary 6 May		X	
Plenary 7 May		X	

¹⁷¹ “In the room,” all floor and interpreter microphones function on automatic: whoever is first to speak gets the floor (the Chairperson can turn off individual microphones). Turn-taking is supposed to be managed by the Chair (or a Vice-Chair) but Members can, and do sometimes, speak spontaneously.

¹⁷² All microphones are controlled by a technician who is following the oral directions of the Chairperson who is running the meeting. No Member can initiate a turn speaking until the Chair has signalled to the technician to turn their microphone on. The technician can also turn any Member’s microphone off if they go over the time limit (following the lenience of the Chair, which varies).

Access to closed meetings (namely, of Political Groups) was not overtly policed except during very high profile discussions or special visits, however if there was ever doubt about my invitation someone would check and I could refer them to the MEP who had invited me. The hemicycles have a public gallery so no permission was required to attend for Plenaries. I was introduced during one informal Intergroup meeting (not the Baltic Intergroup) that involved less than a dozen people, but not in a Member's special meeting on the Kurdish question (about three dozen people). The Trialogues generally involved about a dozen people but I was never introduced. After I had become known, one participant volunteered her initial reaction to my presence:

Interviewee: You sitting there is just – you are just – you are very different to the rest [*laughter*] of the people sitting there. But I mean, you are ____ another one ____, so I mean – but I mean there's a lot of people that sit there takes notes for MEPs or whatever they do, minutes and stuff. But that's somehow attentive in a different way or whatever. . . In the beginning I remember the first meeting where I didn't know who you were – and I felt that you were... I dunno, I was really confused. And you didn't look or behave or anything that remotely could sort of place you in like the Secretariat or the Presidency or anything; so I was a bit – And then I didn't ask, because I thought okay you were with somebody, and that was none of my business or whatever, [*laughter*] but that was quite funny. No but it was just – I just noticed this because the meeting rooms are quite sort of – they – there's a hierarchy; you sit in little groups. So in then in the back there's this mix of NGOs, and you can have a Head of Unit sitting there, you could have – it's a strange mix. But still you can normally identify people somehow by the way they sit there.

Interviewer: So I was unidentifiable.

Interviewee: Yeah. I mean, I would not be able to [*laughter*] say what you were doing there. (F13)

Mainly, what I was doing there was taking a lot of notes. (Audio recording was only done for interviews with prior informed consent.)

4.3.1 A Co-Decision Trialogue

The need for a common EU policy on asylum was established at the 1999 Tampere Summit, which established a deadline of five years for the first phase of legislation and implementation. The original directives were completed in 2004: referred to casually as Qualifications, Procedures, Reception Conditions, Dublin, Eurodac, and the Long Term Residents Directive. These directives established the minimum foundation for a Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Three of the original six directives were up for recast in 2009: the Reception Conditions Directive, “the Dublin 2 Regulation, which determines the member State responsible for the asylum case” (M78), and the Eurodac Regulation, “which is the fingerprinting system that goes along with asylum payments” (OM78). Recasts are a procedure instituted with the Lisbon Treaty (2009).

Recasts allow revisions and improvements to the execution of law previously institutionalized by the Commission and Council without input from the Parliament. Recasts are one of the ways that the EP has gained influence in the overarching process of Europeanization, particularly in terms of democratic representation of the citizenry.

With the new Lisbon Treaty and legislation, the execution is part of the competence of the European Parliament ...now the European Parliament is involved...and, therefore, what we have to change a lot of things in

each law, European law, we have to change it at the end the execution that the European Parliament is involved and which way. (F53)¹⁷³

The chance to re-cast was eagerly received by MEPs, who were following up on the Hague Programme's prioritization of the CEAS asylum process begun at the 1999 Tampere Summit. Tampere established the goal that "by 2010 we should have the second phase starting where we would not only have minimum standards, but we would actually set up common standards" (F84). In providing guidance for the 6th Term of the European Parliament, the Hague Programme was following in step with this previously established timeline.

Following the usual process, the EU Council of Presidents ('the Council') and EP Committee Chairmen determined that asylum policy comes within the competence of the Committee on Justice and Home Affairs,¹⁷⁴ known by its French acronym LIBE. That first "sorting" is followed by a second "sorting" within the LIBE Committee itself, by a

¹⁷³ The Parliament has now become a co-legislator, which is a significant change since Vuorikoski's work in 2004. The principle of co-decision established in the Maastricht Treaty is now in effect and was at play in the Asylum package negotiations: "The European Parliament is not a legislative body in the sense that the national parliaments are as it does not have the right to initiate legislation (Antola 1996: 63)" (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 77). "The most important legislative body is the Council (Antola 1996: 64), which has to receive the proposals from the Commission; Parliament's involvement comes in the final stages of the legislative procedure (Noël, 1993, p. 26, in Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 77). Since the Maastricht Treaty, the EP "has increased its powers enormously, but could be described as still only on the edge of constituting a legislature" (Philip Norton, 1995, p. 192, quoted in Raunio, 1996, p. 18). While the powers of the EP have been on the agenda over the years, there have not been any deep-going changes since the time of this quotation even though the principle of co-decision, approved of in the Maastricht Treaty, did increase the influence of the EP in the legislative process" (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 77).

¹⁷⁴ There are twenty Standing Committees in the EP, also two permanent subcommittees and a varying number of temporary committees. All of the legislative work is categorized according to the competence of each Committee.

group of “one Coordinator from each [political] Group...[who] organize the Committee meetings and...distribute Reports” (F84). The three asylum directive recasts were accompanied by a new initiative to establish a European Asylum Support Office (EASO). All four together composed the Asylum Dossier.

Within the LIBE Committee in the spring of 2009 were representative MEPs from six European political Groups: ALDE, EPP, Greens, GUE, Socialists, and UEN.¹⁷⁵

“Being the lead committee is the important thing” (F84). In this case the lead was the EASO dossier and there “was no fight over this one” (F84). A complicated point system is deployed when necessary following the D’Hondt system of derogation from the number of seats held by each political party. “The small groups, if they want to get interesting Reports, they better save the points. So they don’t take many Reports” (F84). In this case, a Green party MEP was named Rapporteur for the EASO dossier as well as Shadow Rapporteur on the other three asylum dossiers. Each of the other dossiers was assigned its own responsible Rapporteur from the EPP, the Socialists, and ALDE. “The UEN didn’t demand anything” (F84).

There may have been a slight hope that the whole dossier might be approved on the First Reading because the Commission was “really pushing...really keen to get this done and out” which is “not always the case” (F84). Technically, the First Reading refers to the initial, formal establishment of the Parliament’s stance on a given piece of legislation through a voting process in Plenary. The details of the First Reading are

¹⁷⁵ Political Groups represented in the LIBE Committee at the time of research: ALDE - Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe; EPP - European People’s Party-European Democrats; the Greens-European Free Alliance (technically Greens-EFA); GUE - European United Left-Nordic Green Left (technically GUE-NGL); Party of European Socialists (PES); and UEN - Union for Europe of the Nations.

arrived at through a process of intra-Parliamentary Working Group meetings and Committee meetings, and inter-institutional Trialogue meetings with representations from the Council and the Commission. The Council's and Commission's representatives meet with the Rapporteur, Shadow Rapporteurs (or their Assistants) and other representatives from the EP's permanent Secretariats in order to discover their "mutual recognition" regarding "what has been adopted" (F84).

In this instance of the Asylum Dossier, the Commission was under the Presidency of Jose Manuel Barroso. The Council was currently under the leadership of the Czech Presidency. The Council operates in six-month shifts, whereas the Commission's appointed President (like the elected MEPs) stays in office for five-year terms. The Czechs were the last presidency of this Parliamentary term and were motivated to achieve a co-decision success. As it became clear that agreement would not be reached on all points and the Trialogue negotiations would continue into the next legislative term (Parliament's 7th, 2009-2014), necessitating a Second Reading, a representative from the incoming Swedish Presidency also attended meetings.

During the first set of Trialogue meetings, the "First Reading position [which] we have to defend in the Second Reading" (F84) becomes clear, as do any potential "red line" issues.¹⁷⁶ During the First Reading on the Asylum dossier, the Council brought five amendments, three of which were acceptable and two of which were not. There was a sticking point in the Dublin Regulation regarding the concept of detention, because "in Spain you're not allowed to detain asylum seekers for more than forty days" (F84) and

¹⁷⁶ The metaphor of the "red line" is drawn from Europe's wars and the military custom of drawing a red line on maps to show the fronts of battle. (OM63)

none of the other EU countries had a similar restriction. There was also a significant debate with several amendments from Rapporteurs and Shadows trying to establish a solidarity mechanism. The Dublin Regulation

determines what country...will have to treat an application..."You" [asylum seeker] arrive on the coast of Italy, and somehow you manage to move on to Spain...The Spanish government will say, "Where did you arrive?" "Ah, I arrived in Italy, but I come in -" "Well then you have to go back to Italy." You have to apply for asylum in the first country of arrival. Dublin is the regulation that allows a Member State to send people back to where they originally *entered* the European Union. (F84)

The issue of solidarity is crucial to a common policy. "The Parliament Reports are always about minimum harmonization - our party . . . we raise a maximum harmonization" (F10). The minimum standards included this "very *unfriendly* - instrument to shuffle people around...and some Member States are using it a lot, or the ones doesn't have a southern maritime border" (F84). In the Dublin recast, the red line was being drawn around the use of the words "voluntary" or "binding" (F84). Whether and how Member States are required to support those countries bearing the burden of "massive influx" (F84) demonstrates "that a solidarity mechanism is somehow important. Because of course it undermines a little bit the asylum system if you have countries that say, 'Sorry, we up North, we don't care about you down there'" (F84).

Another issue regarding the Procedures Directive also generated amendments and debate in the LIBE Committee but did not rise to the level of a red line in the Trialogue. The Procedures Directive "simply sets up a frame for the procedures to - for applying for asylum...to set up the minimum standards for Member States to apply to when people apply for asylum" (F84). The Procedures Directive governs the rules regarding the provision of simultaneous interpretation to asylum seekers.

4.3.2 “It Pops Up Every Time”

The draft document included providing SI in a language the asylum seeker is “supposed to understand.” One MEP insisted that this was just a bad translation of the French word, a bit of sloppy work by someone from the Commission working in a hurry. It certainly caught my attention! I began to inquire of the MEPs, Assistants, and other staff present or involved with the Asylum dossier: “There was something about...there’s this clause about language, about interpreting...?”

Ah yeah. That’s about – but this is one that has been – it pops up every time we deal with any asylum law. You – when you are asylum seeker and you get your answers, do – can you *claim* or can you *insist* on having it in a language that you are *presumed* to understand? Or what does it – *suspected to*, or what is the word you use? That you are *assumed* to understand? Or should it simply say “a language that you understand”? ‘Cause of course there’s a big difference if you are from Nigeria and are likely to speak English, or if you are from say Malawi or something where you don’t necessarily – not necessarily have a mother tongue of any European language, and that means that you get in writing an explanation why are sent back to Spain? (F84)

There are two issues, one involving whether or not simultaneous interpreting is provided (and in what language/s), and the other regarding the extent to which written communication is expected to suffice (and in what language/s).

As explained in the introduction, the focus of this study is on interpretation because of its immediacy and the co-presence of interpretees in social interaction with each other. In this context, how translation becomes an issue (for asylum seekers as well as MEPs) is when decision-making about diction and the processes of ensuring comprehension of written documents are (or should be) resolved in face-to-face

interpersonal interaction.¹⁷⁷ Because of the need to provide written translations into all official languages of the European Union, clarity of any law in the language which it is drawn up in is vital to ensuring translations will be understood and interpreted by Member States in accord with each other, all across the EU.

Debate in the EP about communication access during asylum proceedings using simultaneous interpretation for asylum seekers is apparently well-worn: “We had on-going discussions on the definition of language for I don’t know how long” (OM71). An Assistant explained,

This whole language issue within the Asylum dossiers... it’s an issue which has been fought over many times in the past...the discussion has been had a million times before; in which case, for [Ms MEP], I guess she didn’t want to bring it up once again. We know that we’re never going to win that one. Is it highly unlikely that the Parliament is ever going to win that argument? It didn’t even win it within itself, because those amendments weren’t adopted. (F09)

Despite the earlier loss on an unequivocal statement of the quality of interpreting provided to asylum seekers, amendments were raised to revise the Commission’s first wording, “supposed to understand.” One direction was to strengthen the asylum seekers’ rights, by “saying ‘understands’ full stop” (OM71). This effort had been made before.

It was introduced but it was not adopted – because it is the Socialists – the Greens and GUE – the left – we all supported that but we didn’t have a majority, because the Liberals and the EPP went against it, because they don’t want that fight with Council, and maybe they don’t really care. Do the EPP really care if an asylum seeker understands them or not? (F09)

¹⁷⁷ Asylum seekers may often be provided with written information only.

Members of the more conservative EPP group would counter, “Do the Greens really understand the reality on the ground?” (F09). So the left and the right within Parliament have a ‘red line’ regarding language accessibility.

Many explained “we have been pointing that out several times” (M71). One Assistant explained her MEP’s position: “The discussion has been had a million times . . . since we’ve been discussing this topic in Parliament the argument has been had and we’ve lost it – this specifically in the face of Council” (F09). “I’ve been doing this job for five years now and I know on another instrument we have been discussing hours with Council on how to define language, you know?” (OM71). The other amendment referred to precedent. One of the Shadow Rapporteurs on the EASO directive

went back to the Return Procedure and...saw the definition used, ‘understands or’ et cetera. And then I phoned with the legal services of the Commission and they confirmed if I would propose that specific definition, that that would improve the Commission text as much as oversight of the Commission ... to follow the definition as already adopted in another instrument” (OM71).

That pre-existing definition is in the Returns Directive,¹⁷⁸ Chapter III, Procedural Safeguards, Article 12 on “Form,” Paragraph 2:

Member States shall provide, upon request,¹⁷⁹ a written or oral translation of the main elements of decisions related to return, as referred to in

¹⁷⁸ Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of The Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals. Official Journal of the European Union. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:348:0098:0107:EN:PDF> retrieved 8 March 2014.

paragraph 1, including information on the available legal remedies in a language the third-country national understands or may reasonably be presumed to understand. (*ibid*)

“The return procedure clearly is something else,” explained one of the MEPs distinguishing it from the directives up for recast, “but in my field, you cannot treat on the language an illegal migrant who is to be returned to his home country different in that respect than somebody who is coming in, you understand?” (M71)

4.3.3 Negotiating Language Policy under Co-Decision

While acknowledging that “the language issue is important” (OM71), it was understood that “the argument has been had and we’ve lost it – this specifically in the face of Council” (F09). Strategically, in the co-decision procedure,

if we [MEPs] have a feeling that we could get a deal in the First Reading, it means that we will try to find views that we can agree on; we’ll compromise on what we’ve find are not essential but also stick to our guns when it comes to more essential parts. For asylum immigration packet [the three recasts], we don’t expect First Reading certainly. On the European Asylum Support Office, I think [the Rapporteur] has a bit of a chance ... but I still think it’s unlikely. (NM80)

Practically, “on the language; they can’t even negotiate that” (F09) because Parliament “didn’t even win it within itself, because those amendments [about understanding the language] weren’t adopted” (F09). Also, according to one Assistant, “there are no organizations sending letters or special cases to [Mr MEP],” even though “there are some

¹⁷⁹ The section continues in Paragraph “3. Member States may decide not to apply paragraph 2 to third country nationals who have illegally entered the territory of a Member State and who have not subsequently obtained an authorisation or a right to stay in that Member State. In such cases decisions related to return, as referred to in paragraph 1, shall be given by means of a standard form as set out under national legislation. Member States shall make available generalised information sheets explaining the main elements of the standard form in at least five of those languages which are most frequently used or understood by illegal migrants entering the Member State concerned.” (*ibid*)

problems with interpreters and problems around passports, and sometimes – that kind of problems we heard about during visits at centers” (F08). Instead, “general reception conditions and a humane treatment that kind of is the first priority. You cannot believe your eyes if you visit Greece or Malta or Cyprus” (OM71). Also, “access to legal advice, what happens to unaccompanied minors” (F09) and (as already described) the solidarity mechanism by which non-border countries support the border countries in matters of asylum and illegal immigration were taken as more foundational to the CEAS than language/communication access.

Establishing another European agency was expected to garner some ideological opposition but not enough to thwart the EASO. For instance, one of the left groups might oppose on grounds of political principle rather than practical justice:

...should there be one or two MEPs...which is *against*, which would be for a matter of principle, some *Nordic* members are usually against *all* new agencies for a matter of principle. So I don’t know what they would do on this one concerning asylum, because everybody in the group is absolutely in favour of whatever can protect asylum seekers’ rights. *But* there might be a problem, because when the Parliament decides to find us a new agency, then there are always some national delegation which are against, especially northern countries. But in this case, I still had no chance to check with my Nordic members, so I don’t know what would be their position. (F11)

Likewise, “a [conservative] German EPP is totally against having any more European agencies because they’re fed up with European money being decentralized after agencies doing something that they consider isn’t that important” (F09).

Nonetheless, most Political Groups were able to deal with

the [EASO] report in Working Group was [because of] the fact we had a very clear line, and this is communicable to Mrs. [MEP], that we will support all of her amendments. And as far as these were seen as making

her chance of getting a First Reading agreement better but not necessarily leading to it. (NM80)

An Assistant to the Shadow Rapporteur from another Political Group, however, prioritized other end-of-term responsibilities and campaigning for re-election:

It's better to wait for the vote because of – [Mr MEP] thinks it's not possible to reach agreement with Council and Commission before the elections. So he said these last three months it's not good to table a lot of amendments on such reports now; it's better to wait for some outcomes after the elections. (F10)

Such a decision not to table amendments in the First Reading does have consequences, as “new ideas can't be introduced. So if we thought, ‘Oh, it would be a good idea for the Asylum Support Office to blah,’ we can't introduce it if we didn't think of it before” (F09). This sequential element of First Reading and Second Reading combined with the co-decision procedure motivated most Shadows “given the fact that this is just before European election, we to draw a line now” because “there's a logic to the First and Second Reading. In Second Reading you can only table amendments that have been tabled in the First Reading” (NM80).

There was a chance to-redraw the line of language access for asylum seekers with the EASO Directive, but the battle needed to be won in the recast directives first. An example is shown for the Procedures Directive, see Table 10.

Table 10. Amendment Reporting Process

Amendment 14 - Recast – Rule 80a of the Rules of Procedure Proposal for a directive Article 9 – paragraph 4	
<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>Amendment</i>
4. Detained asylum seekers shall immediately be informed of the reasons for detention, the maximum duration of the detention and the procedures laid down in national law for challenging the detention order, in a language they are reasonably supposed to understand.	4. Detained asylum seekers shall immediately be informed of the reasons for detention, the maximum duration of the detention and the procedures laid down in national law for challenging the detention order, in a language they understand.

Source: 1st DRAFT REPORT on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers (recast) (COM(2008)0815 – C6-0477/2008 – 2008/0244(COD)){LIBE}Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. Retrieved 8 March 2014.

4.3.4 Simultaneous Interpretation as Social Interaction (SI *squared*)

When the Rapporteurs and Shadow Rapporteurs from a Horizontal Working Group, such as the Asylum Package, report back to the full LIBE Committee (or any Committee) on the status of Trialogue negotiations with the Commission and Council, they use the system of SI in the EP to communicate with each other. By the time such reporting occurs there have been several small meetings and numerous conversations among the Rapporteurs and Shadows (and/or their Assistants) with each other and within each of their respective Political Groups. In the instance of the EASO and Asylum dossier, the first LIBE Committee’s discussion and debate regarding the red line issues and ideas (via amendments) regarding strategies for compromise lasted approximately 34 minutes.

Politically, numerous amendments were brought and voting occurred along customary Group lines. “In a lot of amendments, GUE, Greens and Socialists voted together” (F11). In this instance,

Either an alliance planned in advance or just... how would I say... convergence of intentions, the liberal [ALDE] group and the popular group [EPP] voted together. And when these two groups join, they have a majority in the LIBE committee. So whatever the liberals don't like from the GUE amendments, we never have a chance to pass because we need them to make a majority. (F11)

Prior to the voting, debate on the Amendments in the LIBE Committee was focused on the red line issues. At one point, a heated exchange occurred between the Maltese Member speaking English, and a Dutch Member speaking Netherlands. The issue involved the red line matter of the solidarity mechanism for burden sharing. The interview transcript¹⁸⁰ that follows [below] involves misunderstanding, switching languages (technically called codeswitching), and the notion of voice.

4.3.5 Codeswitching and Voice

As mentioned above, all of the meetings of LIBE's Horizontal Working Group on the EASO and Asylum dossier were conducted in English. The level of these meetings does not usually warrant the provision of simultaneous interpretation, so, in this case, Rapporteurs and Shadows not fluent in English made do by sending Assistants or staff from their Group's Secretariat who were fluent in English on their behalf. This strategy was utilized for the Trialogue meetings too. Interpretation was only provided during the LIBE Committee Meeting (and the brief Coordinator's meeting preceding it). Review Table 9. The one LIBE Committee Coordinator's meeting (held prior to the full Committee meeting) that I observed involved only French and English. That Coordinator's meeting dealt with a surprise move from the EPP regarding postponing the

¹⁸⁰ Written by the researcher in a field notebook as it occurred.

timetable for voting on EASO and the Asylum dossier; the last minute tactic was soundly rejected with a decision to move ahead with the already agreed timetable and address the amendments on the agenda.

Thirty-four minutes of this LIBE Committee meeting were devoted to EASO and Asylum dossier amendments; fifteen booths were staffed at the beginning of the session (and a sixteenth, the Danish booth, became staffed at some point).¹⁸¹ There were approximately seventeen MEPs and 90 other participants present, including observers from the Council of Presidents. During the debate on the asylum amendments, only four languages were uttered from the floor: Dutch, English, French and Spanish. At one count (perhaps corresponding to the use of Spanish) twelve of the seventeen Members were wearing headsets (hence presumably listening to a simultaneous interpretation); at another count (perhaps corresponding with the use of French and/or Dutch) ten of the seventeen Members were wearing headphones.

The Maltese MEP presented some recommendations (speaking English)¹⁸² on behalf of another MEP, who was Rapporteur/Shadow on one of the directives up for recast but was not in attendance. Then the Dutch Member who was Rapporteur on an asylum package directive and Shadow on all the other asylum package directives presented recommendations, speaking in Netherlands. Suddenly the Dutch Member switched to English, with “a question for [Mr MEP]” because of a recommended point

¹⁸¹ These may have been interpreters in training (for any language combination, not necessarily Danish). Taking the opportunity to practice definitely seemed to be the case in the Swedish booth, which was occupied by one person not a team.

¹⁸² Maltese was not yet being provided within the interpretation regime due to training and qualification issues. English is recognized along with Maltese as an official language of Malta: this MEP was raised bilingually.

that “limits the scope of my amendment. We already agreed that Dublin doesn’t increase cost. Could you clarify your intention with your amendment?” (Field Notebook II, p. 18) When the Maltese Member’s turn to respond arrived (six minutes later, after two other MEPs had turns), he said (in English) it was “a tough time getting a compromise. I’m willing to listen, maybe there is a misunderstanding” (*ibid*). A week and a half later, I was able to interview the Dutch MEP about that interaction.

Researcher: Things got a little intense between you and Mr. MEP. Something was going on there.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Researcher: Yeah, and –

Interviewee: We misunderstood each other.

Researcher: Okay. Yeah, I mean it’s – I mean I don’t know either of you well, I mean at all, but I was like, okay.

Interviewee: This is politics.

Researcher: So one, you gave your presentation in Dutch, but then you shifted to English when you were confronting [MEP] and then when you were debating this particular point –

Interviewee: Yeah, point because I was annoyed, yeah.

Researcher: So spell that out for me. You shifted to English because you were annoyed, because why?

Interviewee: I don’t know.

Researcher: I mean how did the annoyance figure in?

Interviewee: I think that normally one would speak, in my case Dutch or whatever language is your mother tongue, just because it’s also important that you express yourself clearly in the right wordings, but you also

sometimes feel that because of translation you cannot give the right emotion to – you understand – the right emotion to what you’re trying to say. So when I get a little bit excited, I might shift to English or even French even though it’s not my mother tongue and I make many mistakes, but just to have a direct conversation instead of having it translated first without the dynamics of my voice, you understand.

Researcher: Okay. You’re like: I want you to hear that I’m really upset right now.

Researcher: Well, I want them to understand – I don’t really realize when I do it to be honest. So I mean this is a Euro bubble and many languages are available and it’s easy happens that within one meeting we speak French, Dutch, English, German all together, you know. So you just shift. Even though you make many mistakes, I couldn’t care less if I’m able to express myself in a specific language then we just move forward.

There is an intriguing mix of practical and discursive consciousness in this MEP’s responses.

The “dynamics of voice,” for instance, are clearly linked with the expression of emotion, a non-verbal characteristic that interpreters may or may not mimic.¹⁸³ This is a layperson’s use of the word, voice, referring to the non-verbal quality of sound. Included in this instance of use (that is, of saying the word “voice” to label what motivated the codeswitch) is a practical use of the metaphor used in the sociolinguistic definition of voice, which involves uptake: e.g., “I want them to understand.” The presumption is that achieving “understanding” will motivate an uptake of meaning, resulting some kind of

¹⁸³ Community-style sign language interpreters who are professionally certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (US), for instance, are expressly enjoined to convey “the tone and intent” of utterances (Hymes’ key), however individual practitioners’ skill and ability varies. Conference-style interpreters in the EP are often criticized by Members as being ‘flat,’ a criticism that Deaf individuals also levy against signed language interpreters who fail to capture the key: those non-verbal tonal qualities of emotion and attitude.

compromise, ideally a compromise that is in line with, or at least closer to, the position this MEP proposes should be staked out.

This particular codeswitch into English appears to be a variation of Scenario B (from Table 7 on MEP's language choice strategies) in which mutual fluency in a shared language is not equal however there is a desire to connect not only on the informational level but also on the phatic level, i.e., an emotional plane.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, as this MEP explains, the goal is not avoiding language mistakes, it is to "shift . . . [so] we just move forward." MEPs frequently do "just shift" (i.e., codeswitch) from one language to another in the middle of talking without necessarily realizing that they're doing so; as admitted by that Member, "to be honest."

Codeswitching is a pervasive feature of social interaction among Members in the EP. Its relative frequency is testimony to both operational elements of the system of SI in the EP: the EP Interpreters and the technical infrastructure, that is, the equipment programmed and operated by technicians.¹⁸⁵ First, the fact that such code switches between languages can be done essentially without the Members' deliberate, conscious awareness is an example of practical consciousness (knowing what to do, when to do it, and how to do it) that provides evidence of the alertness of the EP Interpreters, who catch and respond to these shifts so quickly that Members can perform them practically when

¹⁸⁴ Phatic communication is the use of language to make contact, not to convey information.

¹⁸⁵ Occasionally, Members will shout on the floor without the microphone, particularly during hot debate. This can occur in both settings, that is, in the hemicycle under the technicians' control or in the rooms under automatic controls. It is more likely to occur in the rooms during Political Group and Committee debates than in the hemicycles during plenaries, partly as an effect of jockeying to be the next 'first person' to talk and trigger the microphone to automatically turn on.

they need to, without adding the formal protocol (desired, when possible) of announcing a language switch so that everyone can prepare.

4.4 Simultaneous Interpretation and Social Interaction in the EP (SI²)

What Members want to hold in awareness is the content of the legislation they are negotiating, not the interpretation process. In fact it is extremely challenging to do both, simultaneously. When the evidence of intercultural communication arises because of the language choices of their colleagues or the inevitable (although minimal, percentage-wise) errors of interpreters, the established discourse tends toward complaint: highlighting perceived dangers, risks, and losses of interpreted communication. Not evident in discursive consideration is acknowledgment of the basis of comparison.

“Danger,” “risk,” and “loss” are measured against a non-existent ideal: the presumed absence of comparable risks, losses or dangers in shared language communication. While I was engaged in fieldwork, I referred to this as ‘monolingual’ interaction using a lingua franca or shared language. This confused people who understood themselves as multilingual even if they were using a common language in a given communication event. Eventually, I came to think of the basis of comparison as a bias for *homolingual* communication: the preference to communicate in the same language rather than in a different language. See Table 11.

Table 11. Distinguishing “lingual” terms

Monolingual	Intralingual	Homolingual
A person who knows one language	Communication among people in one language (the same language)	A preference for communicating in the same language
A constant in terms of time & space (unless/until learn another language). Also a form of identity.	Activity of communication in a specific instance. Time-bound. Refers to the language not the person. Objectifies language as external from use, as if language “exists” on its own without people.	Description of language use in a given space and time. METAPHOR for “the same language” — a jargon, set of values, common mission, etc.
Multilingual	Interlingual	Pluralingual
A person who knows two or more languages with some reasonable degree of fluency. Also a form of identity.	Activity, in a specific instance, of communication involving two languages that are understood to be different. Time-bound. Refers to the language not the person. Objectifies language as external to use, as if language “exists” on its own without people.	Use of more than one language in a given space and time. Descriptive.

While maintaining and promoting multilingualism in Europe is the stated goal of EU language policy, the system of SI in the EP seems designed to erase linguistic differences by creating the illusion of interacting in the same language. The evidence of a culturally-constructed homolingual illusion is evident from the discourse, embodied in the practices of social interaction already identified (with more to come), and arises from the capabilities of electronic and digital technology.

CHAPTER 5

CONFERENCE INTERPRETATION AS A TRANSLATION MACHINE

5.1 Distinctions of SI in the EP

Different types of simultaneous interpretation are encountered by Members in various settings in the Parliament, from the high-profile SI during Plenaries to individualized whispering (generally referred to by the French label, *chucotage*) that may occur if, for instance, Members travel on Delegations to other countries. Most MEPs seem to learn ‘what to do’ and ‘how to do it’ by observation and experimentation.

“Theoretically everything is okay but practically,” explains an MEP from ‘old’ Europe,

I have to find a way to speak differently in my own language. When we start working here, translation [sic] requires a different way of talking, you have to account for [it]—speaking short and friendly for the translation [sic]. If it is too complex the message will not pass through.
(OM20)

Members were very reflective when asked direct questions about the interpreting, but in general the discourse works to discourage giving much attention to the system of SI in the EP. The system of use is “not so clear at first,” says an MEP from ‘new’ Europe. “It becomes clearer over time” (NM02).

Overall, the system of SI in the EP can be understood as “a colossal machine” (OM66). At the hub of this machine are

the technicians, the fellows dressed in blue, they make the whole system run. They are the twenty-fourth box: the engineers. Suddenly it happens, the voice stops and you don’t get the interpretation. Suddenly there is silence. Psst! (OM57)

While speaking, the Member gestures as if he's using a screwdriver. From the technician's perspective, however, "For the Members, the machine doesn't exist... They know that there are interpreters, but they don't know there's a machine, so they don't realize that there's a machine between the interpreters and the person" (F12). The invisibility of the technology contributes to "a tendency to treat the interpreter instrumentally" (F04), such as in this Member's description: "It is automatic interpretation." He points as if to each interpreter booth. "I speak in Greek, it goes to the English pivot, to the French interpreter, to the French colleague" (OM24).

From the Members' point-of-view,

There are two kinds of meetings: the whole series of official meetings, of which the translators [sic] are base, and, parallel, hundreds of small meetings, not for everybody—[mainly] Members with the larger languages. These are not translated [sic]. For the big, official meetings, in the first minutes of the planning meeting we decide which languages—roughly 50% with translation [sic] and 50% directly—so we're not losing the time for interpreting. In the small meetings, Frangleis works very well. On the second part, informal networks are created. We know who we can communicate with...of course, some of the Members are completely excluded, in a way marginalized. Both realities are true, both are real. In the second [smaller] one, the people discuss several languages, this expression you know in one language, this expression in another. It is typical of the nobles, not the spectacle to show how he is prepared, but that this is the better expression. (OM20)

Questions of marginalization, the use of lingua francas, "the better expression" (diction), and "losing the time" are themes that recur frequently in the discourse and will be examined more closely later. Of note now is the salient division between formal meetings in which interpreting is provided as a matter of course, and informal meetings in which interpreting is rarely if ever provide (historically and certainly during the time period of this research). Politically, "an effective Member is one who can play at all levels"

(OM66), encompassing the most and least formal, including meetings with no interpretation as well as those guaranteed to provide it. The different demands of social interaction in these two opposite communication infrastructures drive the tensions in the overall discourse about SI in the EP.

For the technician, the interpreting machine is more finely distinguished by the setting and roles of participants. The setting is either in the hemicycle Plenaries, that is, “in the ‘cycle;” or “in the room” for the Political Groups and Standing Committees. Participants’ roles are essentially binary: there are the interpreters “in the booth” and the Members “on the floor.” The first two sections of this chapter will describe the two main settings for formal interpreting (hemicycles, meeting rooms) and the subsequent two sections will describe the two main roles from the technological and geographic vantage points (interpreters in the booth; Members on the floor). The rest of this chapter will elaborate “the human problem” (F12) by mapping the discursive tensions about intercultural, simultaneously-interpreted communication in the EP.

The representative diversity of MEPs who participated in this research is quantified in Tables 12 and 13. Table 12 shows the range of political party membership and Table 13 shows the spread of national identities. The highest participation is from the center-right party, which was the largest political group in the EP during the 6th term (2004-2009). The random sample of self-selected volunteers in this research is proportional to the size of each political group in the Parliament (indicated by rank).

Table 12. Political Party Memberships of Participating MEPs

Ranking by number of seats won (of 785) in elections	Political Party Membership of Participating MEPs / # of participating Members		Position in Political Spectrum
1 st (288)	European People's Party – European Democrats (EPP-ED)	18	center-right
2 nd (217)	Party of European Socialists (PSE)	14	left
3 rd (104)	Alliance of Democrats and Liberals for Europe (ALDE)	11	right
4 th (43)	Greens – European Free Alliance (Greens-EFA)	5	center-left to left
5 th (41)	European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE-NGL)	4	far left
6 th (40)	United for Europe of the Nations (UEN)	1	far right
7 th (30)	Independence/Democracy (IND/DEM)	1	far right
8 th (22)	Non-Attached Members	0*	(mostly) far right

**One appointment was scheduled but the Member did not appear.*

Table 13. Member States of Participating MEPs

Member States of the European Union represented by participating MEPs			
1.	Belgium	14.	Latvia
2.	Bulgaria	15.	Lithuania
3.	Cyprus	16.	Luxembourg
4.	Czech Republic	17.	Malta
5.	Denmark	18.	The Netherlands
6.	Estonia	19.	Poland
7.	Finland	20.	Portugal
8.	France	21.	Romania
9.	Germany	22.	Slovakia
10.	Greece	23.	Spain
11.	Hungary	24.	Sweden
12.	Ireland	25.	United Kingdom
13.	Italy		

**Appointments were scheduled with one MEP each from Austria and Slovenia. The former was a no show and the latter appointment was missed by the researcher.*

5.1.1 SI “In The Hemicycle”

The microphone conference capacity of the electronic technology is used in all the meetings, but differently during the plenary sessions. The plenaries are important to Members because “that’s when one has the most audience” (F05). Members give one-minute speeches that are broadcast to national audiences back home. These overtly political speeches are nearly always delivered in the MEP’s national language. Technicians are monitoring “24 booths with four interpreters and 22 languages spoken . . . [and] all the languages are in real-time translated [sic] in all the languages” (F12). Intriguingly, the technicians are in control of the communication during the hemicycles. This is accomplished by putting the conference microphones into what is called operator mode.

In the hemicycle, the Members know when they have to speak and how long they can speak. They have one minute or one half minute speaking time. The President has to have the complete control of what’s going on. Nobody is able to turn on his microphone and say, “No, I don’t like what he’s talking about,” or things like that. (F12)

From the technical point of view, Plenaries are “contained” and the participation of Members is “programmed” (F12). When the system is “in operator mode nobody ... can do anything, just do a request...only [the technician] can give him the microphone” (F12). The only exception is the President running the meeting, who “has full control of his button...He can always open or close his microphone and can always close another microphone” (F12). The reasons for this level of operator control is to prevent the automatic functions of the system from allowing someone to break the rules. Specifically, “in the hemicycle they don’t debate,” instead “everything is arranged before the meeting”

(F12). This programming includes knowing which languages will be spoken, when and by whom:

Interviewee: Interpreters know before the meetings that's what they will have to translate [sic] in those languages for that speaker, because every speaker is programmed... in any 'cycle, every speaker we know at what time what speaker will talk about what.

Researcher: Right. So then the interpreters aren't surprised. They know the Hungarian guy is coming up.

Interviewee: Yes.

Researcher: And then they've already decided; they already know who's working...

Interviewee: Yes, everything is arranged before the meeting. (F12)

These Plenary sessions are 'the glitz' of the European Parliament's system of simultaneous interpretation.

The main hemicycle at Strasbourg is an impressive circular room filled with semicircular rows of 750 blue desks, a grey carpet, grey-black chairs and white lighted walls with a softly-glowing sheen. The interpreters' booths, along with technicians' and media booths, are placed in two horizontal rows evenly-spaced between floor and the ceiling, appearing like long slits in a spaceship along the curved, shiny walls. Interpreters are visible in internally-lighted booths. Depending upon the angle of viewing, the glass of unlit booths is opaque or reflective. Galleries for the press, visitors and other observers ring the top. The new hemicycle in Brussels is equally elegant. It is "much nicer" (F13) than the previous facility.

The one-minute speeches are "a talk for the record, not to be understood [by other Members]. I am speaking to constituents, not to Members" (OM08). After the speeches there is discussion (that is called 'debate') but "it is not debate, its just monologues. You

may include questions but they don't have to respond, only if they feel like it" (OM42). The 'debate' after the speeches is also programmed. Plenaries are organized as a public presentation to an international audience. They are for Members "to be heard by constituents" (OM33). "Debate in Plenary is not really a creative process, [although] Members might make important statements that give you insight to dig deeper with those in charge" (OM61). The highly-regulated conditions of social interaction are what make Plenary so convenient for functional linguistic research.¹⁸⁶

The reference to 'those in charge' refers to the clearly-defined decision-making hierarchy of designing legislation that is conducted by the European Parliament: the Parliament's institutional *competence*, in the parlance of the European Union. "The [Political Group] Coordinators are the main players—they decide what proposals to take, who will be the Rapporteur, and how to organize the debate" (OM20). Likewise, "in Committees, the political procedure is in the hands of very few people—the Rapporteurs and Shadows. All the conclusions are made elsewhere [than in the Plenary]" (OM61).

¹⁸⁶ Vuorikoski (2004) cites Marzocchi and Zuchetto (1997) in support of her selection of plenary for her study. "The plenary seems...to provide suitable conditions for research," (Marzocchi and Zuchetto, 1997, p. 82) for the reasons they outline (professional recognition and intensity of effort by European Parliament interpreters) and also because the plenary session of the European Parliament is an ideal speech situation for functional linguistic research based on comparing target text interpretations with original source material. Drawing on Kalina, 1998, p. 130), Vuorikoski reports, "obtaining relevant and authentic material has been a major problem for SI studies." She continues: "One solution to these problems has been to select a speech situation which is characterized by features that remain constant. This is the plenary session of the European Parliament, where the speech situation is governed by strict rules of procedure. Furthermore, each speech is interpreted in ten languages. The setting is thus a source for material that provides an ideal opportunity for comparing interpreters' versions with the originals" (2004, p. 22). *Note: her research was conducted previous to the "big bang" enlargement.*

The label of conference interpreting suits the Plenary setting very well. In Plenary sessions, the Members talk about issues and politics, making a show of debating with each other. While there may be ideological or practical messages delivered to colleagues (the other Members) during Plenaries, the speech performances are explicitly in each MEPs official language for national consumption at home more than for actual interaction with their peers in the hemicycle. The lines of debate and compromise regarding legislation are hashed out “elsewhere” in (less formal) Working Groups and Trialogues. The lines of real engagement for debate and negotiation are confirmed in the formal Political Group and Standing Committee meetings that occur “in the room,” not “in the ‘cycle.’”

5.1.2 SI “In The Room”

In contrast with the glamorous hemicycles designed as the public showcase of the European Parliament, the Political Groups and Standing Committees do their work in large meeting rooms. “In the rooms it’s different because every group has his room or rooms, and in the room they debate” (F12).¹⁸⁷ The conference microphone system is used in the rooms similarly to how they are used in plenary but the interaction of Members is much more fluid. “In the other [non-plenary] rooms, there’s no programming of the speaker, so they debate...so number 116 talks to this one and asks a question. [Number 116] answers. It’s a relay debate” (F12). The two significant differences between SI in the hemicycle and SI in the room involve control and interaction. Technically speaking,

¹⁸⁷ Notice that this section is composed of quotes from technicians, not Members. Remember that Members do not tend refer to “rooms” or “hemicycles” but rather to the types of meetings: “Committee,” “Group,” or “Plenary.”

whereas the technician functionally controls turn-taking via operator mode in the ‘cycle; in the room, the microphones run on a First On First Off (FIFO) system, with which “up ‘til four Member’s microphones can be on simultaneously in the meeting room” (F37). It is practically an inverse relationship of interpersonal interaction with technological control: in the Plenary, a rigid schedule of turn-taking and time limits is enforced by a technical engineer according to a pre-designed script; in the Group and Committee meetings, the social interaction is managed by technology running on a kind of auto-pilot with minimal override.

I observed Political Group Meetings nine times (the EPP four times; ALDE three times; the Greens and GUE twice each, and the PSE and IND-DEM once apiece, see Table 14) and Committee meetings fourteen times; as well as several formal Working Groups, seminars, book launches and pre-Committee meeting Coordinators’ Meetings (see Table 14). I tracked which booths were staffed with interpreters and what languages were spoken by Members on the floor. To determine the language, I would channel surf with my headset to find which booth was *not* working during a given Member’s turn. I took as evidence when the speaker’s voice from the floor was piped through that language channel. A technician explained, “by default every time the floor—for the moment no interpreters are speaking, on every channel you get the floor” (F12).

Depending upon what channel a Member (or guest or assistant or any person with business in the room) is listening to, if that booth is working you hear the interpreter. If the booth is not working, “the system will switch on the floor” (F12). For the first several months, I relied on this method without question because the languages associated with each channel are fixed and the geographical booth numbering matches the channels.

(Review Table 4.) Then I learned that the technicians can “re-affect the programming of each geographic booth. So for the speaker it’s completely invisible and the interpreters are in another booth” (F12). I observed this when it became ‘visible’ during a meeting of Working Group C of the EPP-ED¹⁸⁸ when the Chair responded with good humor to a complaint from Members on the floor:

There is no Greek translation coming from the Danish booth, this is wonderful. The Danish interpreters? The Greek members are happy? You can speak Danish? The Danish interpreters have moved to the Greek box! This is becoming wonderful!

Such a switch might happen because the interpreters “would prefer being in front, have a better view or things like that” (F12).

The descriptions to follow represent relatively mundane examples of these meetings in order to establish the baseline, a fairly-normal pattern of intercultural communication using the formal provision of simultaneous interpretation in the regime of controlled multilingualism. In the Political Group observation, there was one particularly sharp exchange which, in retrospect, illustrated an unusual and striking shift in the dynamics of language use that opens insight into some of the factors motivating Member’s language use choices.

¹⁸⁸ Working Group C was the Legal and Home Affairs Sub-Committee of the European Peoples Party - European Democrats. See Table 12 for a list of political party acronyms.

Table 14. Types of Observations—General

Type of Observation (excludes Asylum dossier meetings)	“in the room” = FIFO System*	“in the hemicycle” = Operator System	No SI provided
Dalai Lama’s speech***		X	
Plenary (Strasbourg)****		X	
EuroParl TV Studio			X
Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET)	X		
AFET	X		
AFET	X		
LUFPIG (intergroup)			X
COCOBU (Coordinators)			X
EPP-ED Group Seminar: “What Values to Promote in Europe?”	X		
Euro Crisis Workshop			X
Greens Political Group	X		
Book Presentation	X		
Environment Committee (ENVI)	X		
Employment Committee (EMPL)	X		
EPP-ED Working Group C	X		
Baltic Intergroup			X
EPP-ED Political Group	X		
Plenary (Strasbourg)		X	
Industry, Research and Energy Committee (ITRE)	X		
ITRE	X		
PSE Political Group	X		
Plenary		X	
EPP-ED Coordinators Meeting	X		
EPP-ED Political Group	X		
ALDE Political Group	X		
ALDE Working Group B	X		
GUE Political Group	X		
IND-DEM Political Group	X		
Baltic Intergroup			X
Book Launch	X		
Baltic Intergroup			X

Type of Observation (excludes Asylum dossier meetings)	“in the room” = FIFO System*	“in the hemicycle” = Operator System	No SI provided
Greens Political Group	X		
ALDE Political Group	X		
Plenary		X	
Press Conference: E-Learning for Interpreters	X		
GUE Political Group	X		
The Kurdish Question (special meeting)	Informal interpretation provided by a non-professional.		

**In FIFO, all floor and interpreter microphones function according to the First On First Off principle, with up to four microphones active at a time. Whoever is first to speak gets the floor. The Chairperson can turn off all microphones with a single switch. Language channels for listening are permanently established. Programming determines whether the language heard through the headset comes from the floor or the channel's designated interpretation booth. Members can switch channels in order to listen to the language they prefer.*

*** In Operator Mode, all microphones are controlled by a technician who is following the directions of the Chairperson who is running the meeting.*

**** Watched via EuroParl TV from an MEP's office.*

***** Observed from inside an interpretation booth.*

5.1.2.1 Example: A Political Group

During this Political Group meeting, twenty booths were staffed: German, English, French, Italian, Dutch, Greek, Spanish, Portuguese, Finnish, Swedish, Czech, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Polish, Slovakian, Slovenian, Bulgarian, and Romanian. Danish and Maltese interpretation was not provided. All booths were active in the beginning of the meeting, but a check partway through discovered that the Lithuanian booth had stopped interpretation. This was confirmed again at a later time. At one point, it also seemed the Romanian booth may have stopped as well, but this was short-term if at all. (It is always possible that a few booths are staffed with interpreter-trainees (if no one present requires that language); and (as noted above) sometimes a geographic booth

may be staffed by interpreters working a different language than the one normally associated with that channel (but the language channel they are working on would remain the same to avoid confusion for Members on the floor. These factors introduce the potential of researcher fallibility regarding language identifications and counts.)

With only one exception, each Member spoke their national language. There were two Chairs (or a Chair and Vice-Chair) whose voices are interspersed between turns of Members from the floor. One consistently spoke German and the other French. Most of their contributions were logistical, simply rote *thank you*'s at the conclusion of a speaker's turn and introduction of the next speaker. Nearly every single speaker's turn was done in a different language and no one seemed to miss a beat in terms of the ongoing continuity of communication. Dutch (NL, using the International Standards Office (ISO) Language Codes, see Table 4) was the first language I recorded for tracking purposes during this meeting. The subsequent 69 turns (70 in total) went like this:

NL, DE (German, for Deutsch), NL, DE, FR (French), EN (English), FR, DE, EN, DE, EN, DE, EN, DE, ES (Spanish, for Espanol), DE, FR, EN, IT (Italian), DE, IT, FR, DE, ES, FR, DE, RO (Romanian), ES, DE, ES, FR, EN, ES, EN, DE, ES, NL, EN, FR, DE, FR, EN, FR, EN, FR, EN, FR, ES, FR, ES, FR, EN, FR, DE, FR, DE, FR, EL (Greek, a translation of their script), EN, FR, DE, ES, DE, ES, FR, EN, FR, NL, EN, FR.

Eight of the twenty languages that SI was provided for were spoken from the floor.

These eight source languages were simultaneously-interpreted into all twenty target languages provided for by the SI system of controlled multilingualism, which means customized to the language profile of known participants who would listen to the interpretation into their national language during the meeting. ("Provided that people listen...that's another matter" (OM42). Listening behavior and headphone use are a recurring theme in the overall discourse that will be described later.) The source

languages spoken by Members during this political group meeting are ranked by amount of use from the floor, given as an approximate percentage of the total observation time of 105 minutes, from opening gavel until the conclusion of the meeting. I estimated the length of speakers' turns in minutes. (See Table 15.) The goal was not to nail down an exact measurement with the precision of seconds but to be able to provide a general characterization of a typical meeting in a room.

Table 15. Languages Spoken from “The Floor” during a Political Group Meeting “In a Room”

Language Spoken by an MEP “in the room”	Total Minutes this language was spoken in this meeting (in minutes)	Percentage of Meeting Time (105 minutes, total)
Spanish	36	34%
German	31	29%
English	19	18%
Dutch	7	4%
French	3	3%
Italian	3	3%
Greek	3	3%
Romanian	2	2%

The frequency of use of languages is a function of the language profiles of Members in the Group, the relevancy of the topics to national constituencies, and the distribution of positions of status among Members (namely the Rapporteur and Shadow Rapporteur positions although of course any other Members with political interests in the subject can, and do, contribute). Such variables preclude any possibility of this particular breakdown (or any other breakdown from one meeting or plenary session) being representative of language use in the Parliament overall. Also, to re-emphasize: the

percentages of source languages spoken from the floor demonstrate only one side of the SI system.

The other side of the system involves the interpretations rendered by the interpreters into all the languages required for listening comprehension. In this case, 100% of the time of the meeting for the twelve languages that were not spoken from the floor (except, as noted above, Lithuanian. The Member may have been going back-and-forth between two concurrently-scheduled meetings); and, for the eight languages that were spoken as source languages, 100% minus the time that their language was in use by a Member on the floor. For example, the Spanish booth worked 66% of the meeting (interpreting from any of the other seven source languages into their target language), while the Greek and Italian booths each worked 97% of the time (also interpreting from any of the other seven source languages into their respective target language). In this particular meeting, I did not detect either a *retour* or a *relay*.¹⁸⁹

My first visual scan about five minutes after I settled in discerned roughly one third of the MEPs present wearing their headphones. Some time later, as more Members arrived and the debate heated up, approximately half of the sixty-two MEPs present were using headphones. Unless I had interviewed them, I did not know the MEPs' language profiles. The guest and assistant section seats are not positioned in a way to see "the nameplate...[which] says which language—and the officials have a list" (F30).¹⁹⁰ It was

¹⁸⁹ Recall: *Retour* is to interpret from the booth's language into another language (untraditional). *Relay* is when an intermediary interpretation is needed to accommodate a language combination that none of the interpreters assigned for a particular meeting possesses.

¹⁹⁰ It may have helped to acquire this list but it was a resource I did not imagine existed and learned about long after I had established an observation protocol.

not possible to assume whether the two-thirds to half of Members without headphones were fluent in all the languages used, disinterested in the topic being debated, or satisfied to understand some colleagues and not others. (As mentioned above, more on Member use and non-use of headphones to come.)

Throughout this meeting, the system of simultaneous interpretation worked without any discernable problems. Of special significance is that serious battle was engaged vigorously and aggressively by several Members in two opposed camps on a particular referendum. A long-time Member (on one side of the argument) told me a month later, “it was the worst I’ve ever seen” (OM44). Another MEP (from the other side of this argument) grinned expansively when I asked him nearly three weeks later if he remembered the details of the exchange: “I remember it well!” (NM27). The fact of simultaneous interpretation did not diminish Members’ pleasure in political banter and repartee.

5.1.2.1.1 English: A Language for Control?

I first noticed the use of English as a language of control in a Political Group meeting. English, French and Italian were the main languages used on the floor (as source languages for the interpretation into other languages). This Group meeting (in the room) was called to order in English, and once most Members were paying attention the Chairperson switched to speaking in French. Later, when there was a spurt of quick interjections and repartee, the Chair shifted back to English and continued in English, as did Members speaking from the floor. This persisted until the burst of heightened interaction was contained. English was used a third time in the group to overcome a rising tide of murmurs that swelled into the background during a Member’s somewhat lengthy turn (compared with the average time spent speaking by Members prior).

This last occurrence was the one that caught and focused my attention on the codeswitching to English, because it was the first time I heard this Vice-Chairperson use English instead of Italian. This Vice-Chairperson had already spoken several times, consistently in Italian. It was a surprise and clearly a departure from the norm when this Member used English with an accompanying increase in volume to quiet the growing background murmur. It seemed to be the English as much or more so than the volume that drew everyone back to the central, shared task. Once noticed, I observed this phenomenon repeatedly in all kinds of meetings (both in the rooms and in the hemicycles). English is used regularly in an authoritative bid to command attention.

In a different meeting (a Working Group of one of the Standing Committees), a Spanish MEP “lost her temper” (as explained to me later by an MEP who witnessed the event) “and shouts at” (OM66) a Member who had interrupted somebody else with a Point of Order. The Member (who typically speaks Spanish) burst out in English, referring to herself in third person: “She agrees with that!” This dramatic codeswitch drew attention to a compromise that some Members [according to my source] were not letting on was possible. Repeatedly I observed English used to interrupt flows of communication occurring in other languages or to draw everyone’s focus to an particular assertion of voice. This tactic was used Members accorded authority to facilitate the meeting by virtue of their position/status (being a Chair or Vice-Chair) and by Members from the floor trying to establish a rhetorical position.

5.1.2.2 The Committees

As mentioned earlier, the bulk of the work of the European Parliament is organized through the institutionalized organization of formal Committees. The Standing

Committees, their permanent administrative staff (called Secretariats), and their competencies (areas of expertise and responsibility) persist as the EP's bureaucratic infrastructure, while the Political Groups change in composition, alliances, and strategies from election to election. I was invited to observe the work of five different Committees, including sub-committee Working Groups and Coordinators' meetings. The Foreign Affairs Committee detailed below seemed routine. Observations of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL), the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), Industry, Research and Energy Committee (ITRE) and the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE) all yielded a similar pattern.

5.1.2.2.1 Foreign Affairs Committee Meetings

The Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET) is one of the larger Standing Committees in the European Parliament. I observed a series of meetings during one week at the Brussels Parliament complex. AFET Committee Meetings are streamed through the Parliament's internal television system for Members and their Assistants to track from their offices and for journalists to watch from the Press Bar. Soundbites may later be broadcast over the internet. From my observer position seated in the room (specifically in the visitor's section on the floor), the technical orchestration of the system of simultaneous interpretation (i.e., the regime of controlled multilingualism) was seamless. Twenty-three languages were actively interpreted: 21 of the 23 official EU languages (except Irish and Maltese) and two non-EU languages as well: Tajik and Russian. The President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Emomalii Rahmon, brought his own (solo) interpreter, and Mr. Konstantin Kosachev from the Russian Duma brought a team of

interpreters. The use of *relay* and *retour* during this AFET meeting did not seem to generate any disturbances within the communication dynamics of the group as a whole. Per my fieldwork protocol, I noted what languages were used, and (roughly) for how long. See Table 16. As with the other similar tables, all measurements and calculations are approximate. Of the total time, 7% was given to non-EU languages (Russian & Tajik), while 23% was given to official EU languages other than English. If the two non-EU languages are removed, then the ratio of English to all other official EU languages in this meeting was 3:1 (75% to 25%).

Only Members have microphones but everyone on the floor has access to their own set of headphones: Members, Assistants and Visitors. Some regular participants do bring their own earphones. (I was in some observations where there were more people than seats; I always tried to arrive early in order to secure a seat with headphones.) There were 27 booths available for use in the largest rooms: when a Member begins to speak in a language you do not know, you simply tune your headphones to the channel number of the language booth to which you prefer to listen (review Table 4). Members have preferences and reasons for selecting an interpreted language for listening, depending on their own language repertoire, levels of fluency, motivation for language learning and overall experience with the system. For instance, Members learn which interpreters, whom they recognize by voice, and/or booths (according to reputation) tend to produce performances that meet their listening criteria). “At a certain moment, you know Mr A is better than Mrs X or Mrs B is best with that combination” (OM09).¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ This Member’s observation contradicts Vuorikoski’s statement that “it is practically impossible to tell the various interpreters apart” (2004, p. 22).

Table 16. Languages Spoken from “The Floor” during a series of AFET Committee meetings “In a Room”

Language Spoken by an MEP “in the room”	Total Minutes this language was spoken in this meeting (in minutes)	Percentage of Meeting Time (510 minutes, total)
English	346	70%
Nederlands	30	5.8%
Tajik	20	3.9%
French	19	3.7%
German	17	3.3%
Polish	17	3.3%
Russian	16	3.1%
Greek	10	2%
Spanish	10	2%
Hungarian	3.5	.7%
Lithuanian	3.5	.7%
Slovenian	3.5	.7%
Danish	2	.4%
Estonian	2	.4%
Romanian	2	.4%
Swedish	2	.4%
Bulgarian	0	0%
Czech	0	0%
Finnish	0	0%
Italian	0	0%
Latvian	0	0%
Portuguese	0	0%
Slovak	0	0%

All of the interpreters, as observed on a consistent basis without exception, are in their booths ready to go at the scheduled start times, and none of them bolt out at the end—even when meetings go over the announced end time (which happens occasionally). When there were unplanned recesses or the meeting ended early, there was likewise no rush to get out of the booth. This professionalism generates a sense of the interpreters enjoying their work, their colleagues, and the atmosphere.

5.2 The Technological Hub: Two Synchronized but Separate Systems

Completely separate from the Member's use of the conference microphone system for speaking is the "interpretation system" used by the Parliament's interpreters in their respective language booths. In combination, the two systems compose the global system of technology for SI in the EP.

Table 17. Discursive Relations among Geographic References

	Geographic Reference		
Phrase used in discourse	"on the floor" or "from the floor"*		"in the booth"
	"in the room"	"in the 'cycle' or 'in the hemicycle"	

*Includes utterances from the Chair, Vice-Chair and other participants at the head table (Secretariat staff, guests, etc).

5.2.1 SI "In The Booth"

The interpretation systems runs on the automatic setting that is never used with the conference microphone system. It involves two channels, A and B. Channel A is fixed as the outgoing language for that booth. Channel B is programmable by each interpreter, individually, if they will be responsible for giving *retour* interpretations. Depending on the size of the meeting room or hemicycle there may be one to three dozen booths. Each booth is equipped with three or four consoles (also called a "desk") with inputs for the interpreter's headset),¹⁹² a channel knob, and an array of pre-sets for interpreters to select incoming languages *from other booths* that he or she predicts may be useful or even necessary. Channel A is the outgoing language: the interpreters are always

¹⁹² "If I would be an interpreter," a technician said, "I would have my own headphone...because I don't know how many ears have been on this headphone" (F12). Most interpreters do bring their own headsets (F36).

working into Channel A to be heard by the Members according to the ISO-numbered channels on their dial (Table 4).

In any and every booth,

the desk is programmed. These are the seven output channels available from the desk. So—German, that we can’t change. This is called Channel A. So [in this case, German] is the default channel from the booth, the same channel as the name, the physical name from the booth. (F12)

The pre-set buttons allow the interpreter to tune to languages from other booths when they do not know the language being spoken by the Member on the floor:

You [the interpreter] know you will have to work in half an hour to reduce [for example] the Hungarian person to German, but you don’t understand Hungarian and you know you will have to listen to the English booth instead of the floor. So you can arrange your pre-set here to English, and when your turn comes you listen to the English instead of the floor. (F12)

In this example, both *retour* and *relay* are occurring. An interpreter in the Hungarian booth will be prepared to interpret *from* Hungarian into English: this is the *retour*. She or he will have pre-programmed Channel B on her or his desk to go out on the English Channel (#2) *as if* coming from the English booth.¹⁹³ When the Hungarian Member begins to speak from the floor, the *retour* interpreter in the Hungarian booth will press Channel B and override the English booth’s Channel A output.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ “On most consoles, interpreters themselves can define with what channel their B coincides...In some of the older meeting rooms, though, it is the technician who assigns the channels and who needs to make the switch allowing the Czechs [for example] to use the German channel” (F12).

¹⁹⁴ Using a Hungarian Member in this example was spontaneous and arbitrary. This particular scenario became more complicated in the 7th term (2009-2014) because of the need to incorporate Hungarian Sign Language in the *retour* and *relay*.

Every booth without an interpreter with competence in Hungarian will also have already established an incoming pre-set from the English booth in their respective consoles. When the Hungarian Member begins to speak, the working interpreter in these booths will select their pre-set to the English booth. Thus,

the *retour* interpreter in the Hungarian booth rendering the Hungarian speaker into English will be heard by any interpreters in other booths who switch from floor to the English channel—by pushing the pre-set button—and by any listener in the meeting room who is listening to interpretation into English. (F36)

All of the rest of the Members (as well as everyone else in the meeting, Members' Assistants, Secretariat officials, guests and visitors) who do not understand either Hungarian or English will wait for the *relay*. The *relay* is the second interpretation from those booths whose interpreters are depending on the Hungarian booth's *retour* into English so that they can render an interpretation into their respective languages, be it German, Czech, Portuguese, etc. This is just an example, as "the Hungarian booth might work into English on Channel B, or they might work into French" (F12).

Channel B is invisible to the Members. From their perspective, there is only the matched pairing of channel numbers and languages managed by one dial. But for the interpreters, every booth has the capacity to send out on two channels, default Channel A, their assigned language, and Channel B, a *retour* language. Theoretically, any booth could provide a *retour*. In practice, only interpreters of the so-called exotic languages¹⁹⁵ perform interpretations both into and out of their language. *Retour* interpreters work for

¹⁹⁵ The phrase "exotic languages" is used by interpreters to refer to languages that fewer interpreters have competence in, compared with more frequent language combinations in the professional corps.

two audiences: directly for listeners on the floor and for their colleagues to render an additional *relay* interpretation into a third language for listeners on the floor.

If the *retour* [of a given language] is into German, the pre-selection for the B channel will be the German channel. When *retour* from Czech into German is needed, the *retour* interpreter [in the Czech booth] will push the B button and thereby ‘usurp’ the German channel; i.e. the German booth will not be able to ‘send’ from that moment, as their channel is occupied by the Czech *retour* interpreter. (F36)

That is another example using the same mechanism described above with Hungarian and English. Although there is no explicit requirement, “the rules are to translate in English. Channel B is normally English, French or German, because these are the three languages that are the most understood from every interpreter” (F12).

In addition to being able to establish up to five or six pre-set incoming languages (which are labelled in a small digital screen), the desk/console also indicates the interpretation source of the auditory signal that the interpreter is listening to at every moment. This is important information for the interpreter to know: “A plus [symbol: +] means direct interpretation from the floor” (F12), i.e., that the booth an interpreter has chosen to listen to is actually “listening to the floor” (F36). “A minus sign [-] means the booth is working on *relay*” (F36).

A technician said the meaning of the minus sign is: ““Be careful. This interpretation is not the first interpretation. It’s a relay”” (F12). This is the example we had above, in which a Hungarian Member’s speech is being interpreted via *retour* from the Hungarian booth on the English channel: “if I’m listening to the English booth and trying to translate [sic] what comes out from the English booth instead of translating [sic] the speaker” (F12) from the floor. In other words, although the signal is being transmitted through the English Booth’s Channel A, the interpretation did not originate in the English

booth but in the booth of an exotic language (e.g., in our examples the Czech or Hungarian booth).

Finally, a “zero [0] means the booth is inactive, possibly because its output language is being spoken on the floor” (F36). This is the common situation when, for instance, a Portuguese Member is speaking from the floor, the Portuguese interpreters are just listening. In a rare instance, this technician explained that an interpreter might see a double minus [--], to indicate a *double relay*, say from Romanian to French to English to Latvian (F16). “An X means ‘they are listening to themselves.’ We can listen to ourselves to check the headphones or to check the microphone. The system permits that” (F12).

The controls available to interpreters are the same in the rooms and in the hemicycles. In the hemicycle/Plenary meetings, interpreters are provided with the program and know exactly the sequence in which everyone will speak and in which language. In the rooms, the interpreters receive no information about which Members will be present, nor when they might speak. In the rooms “there is no programming of the speaker, so they debate” (F12). In other words, the interaction is spontaneous, not planned as it is in the Plenaries. One interpreter expressed the wish for more detailed information about Members’ presence and participation in the meetings. “We can only bring our own list of Members belonging to the Committee, Delegation, or Political Group...or look it up on the intranet or internet...normally we do not receive a list of MEPs who will attend the meeting” (F36).

The difference, therefore, between the environmental conditions and settings for interpreting ‘in the ‘cycle’ and ‘in the room’ is quite significant. Even during debate ‘in the hemicycles’ for Plenary sessions, the Members’ communication is directed ‘outward’

to national audiences as political representation and public relations. Because of the nature of mass communication, plenary programs are carefully coordinated. ‘In the rooms,’ however, Members’ communication is directed ‘inward’ towards each other and the products of the Parliament, which is legislation. The ramifications for the interpreters ‘in the booth’ are profound:

So the Czech member speaks Czech, usually, 99 percent of the time. There are some Members – I speak about Daniel Cohn-Bendit.¹⁹⁶ I don’t know if you know him. He’s German and French and he speaks both languages as well. So sometimes he speaks German; sometimes he speaks French. It depends on who he’s talking to. So if he’s talking to another Member that understands French, he speaks French. So the interpreters, one time it’s the French booth that works and one time the German booth. (F12)

Although it can be rough at the start of a term, the interpreters do learn Members’ language profiles and speaking preferences, as well as their rhetorical tendencies.

5.2.2 SI “On The Floor”

From the technician’s perspective, a Member

can’t do errors. I don’t know how. The only error they can do is take the headphone and trying to change his channel and it doesn’t work, of course, because he doesn’t have the headphone connected to the correct selector. That’s the only error, but he can’t make errors and he isn’t aware of what’s going on in technical. He just has to know he has to speak in this microphone, not too far from the microphone and not too close to the microphone. (F12)

It may have been a technician’s programming error in the confusion (described above) of the Danish booth working physically out of the Greek booth. Sometimes I observed Members begin to speak and their microphones did not activate. Occasionally Members

¹⁹⁶ Not interviewed as a participant in this research.

would continue to speak even though the microphone was not working. Interpreters cannot hear from within the booth and are thus unable to interpret for Members who are not familiar with the language that Member is speaking.

Human error can also enter the system with the interpreters' programming of the desks. For instance, "they have the possibility to connect their headphone" (F12) in "two official jacks [pointing at them on the desk]...that they're supposed to use...but sometimes, I don't know why, they prefer to connect [pointing to another spot]... So they disconnect this wire that sends the signal" (F12). This physical manipulation can create a cascade effect:

So [interpreters in the booth] turn the desk and that pulls on the wires and sometimes creates bad contacts. You see, if I disconnect this desk I will also – so this system is connected on one bus. That's a digital bus. On one bus we can connect ten desks. So instead of connecting these four and these four that make eight and two in another booth, we connected two, two, two, two....So if there's a crash on one booth there are still two other desks remaining in the booth. So that's just a reason to secure a bit more the system, because every desk is connected in a daisy chain. Every ten desks are connected in a daisy chain. For example, if the first desk in the chain crashes, even if they work, they won't have the signal anymore...if it's the last desk chain there's no problem...if it's the first . . . (F12)

Speculating on why the interpreters might use the incorrect jack, the technician replied:

For me, it's because they don't know that they can plug the headphone in here. On the other system, there was the connector here, so—on the side of the booth. So maybe they – I don't know...usually they did that, so it is like habituated? I don't know. They do the same thing they did before, even if they don't have to or they don't need to. (F12)

From the researcher's vantage point, I was only aware of a very few glitches that could have been attributed to either the technicians or the interpreters.

5.2.2.1 Making Human Errors Impossible?

“If it goes badly,” a technician told me, “it is twenty or ten percent interpreters’ errors and the rest is how the meeting is arranged [...by...] the technician who is in charge of the meeting, he has to react to the situation or adapt the situation in real time” (F12). The technicians aspire to be invisible: “When they don’t know I exist, it is that I did a good job because there was no problem” (F12). Promoting this degree of unawareness for Members is an overt goal of the system of SI in the EP, a kind of intentionally-designed unconsciousness. “What the Parliament dreams about is something that would work alone...to make human errors impossible” (F12).

One of the questions that I wondered about, often, is how much the ambition for the technology to cocoon the Members so they can work without comprehending the significance of the Parliament’s fascinating intercultural communication milieu spills over into expectations for the interpreting. Like the technician who said, “there are a lot of errors made that could be solved just by knowing how the system works” (F12), I wonder if some of the frustrations with interpreting expressed by Members could be alleviated if Members understood how the system of SI in the EP works, what it has already accomplished, and how it could further achieve the goal of a common European identity.

Although surely an overstatement, one Member explained that “where politics happens is everywhere else” (OM40) than within the official, formalized system of SI in the EP.

5.2.3 Meetings with No Provision of Interpretation

A significant amount of the legislative work of Members of the European Parliament occurs in contexts without professional simultaneous interpretation.

5.2.3.1 A Coordinator's Meeting

I was introduced by the Member who invited me to the Budgetary Control Committee (COCUBU) Coordinators Meeting¹⁹⁷ as a researcher looking at “how we can cope with our language system.” Coordinators’ meetings occur just prior to Committee Meetings with the goal of delineating in advance the lines of engagement from each political group in the imminent debate. Every political group selects an individual to become the group coordinator regarding work being done in each of the Parliament’s permanent or temporary working committees.

In this particular Coordinators’ meeting there were six men and eleven women from various countries and the Commission, all speaking English with no simultaneous interpretation. The Chair (a position that rotates among the Coordinators – at least in this case) provided an overview of the agenda and invited questions and input. Not everyone spoke, but of those who did their English was readily understandable despite accents, except for one person whose accent became more prominent for a few phrases. In my notes, I recorded this incident as “lapsed into thicker accent, hard to follow.” No one asked for clarification. This left me wondering if I was the only one who struggled in that

¹⁹⁷ Quotes are coded differently in this section by randomly-assigned Participant Number (P1, P2, etc). No demographic or other identifying information was collected. Most of this dialogue is summarized without attribution.

moment, or whether there is a culture and criteria as to when one asks and when one does not ask to clarify someone's enunciation.

One Coordinator provided some background on dynamics between his group's Shadow Rapporteur and the Rapporteur of a Report on security, explaining that there appeared to be a deviation from this working group's customary practice in terms of procedures. The current Rapporteur (from a specific political group) was not engaging with the Shadows as much as last year's Rapporteur had, which this Coordinator characterized as "strange" (P1). Another topic, regarding a category of lump sum payments made to Members as part of their compensation package, was named as "the most politically sensitive" (P2). The group jumped among topics occasionally, leaving me unclear at times what plan of action was being decided for which problem: the security matter itself or the unusual dynamics with the non-conforming Rapporteur?

A comment about "the hardest topic" (P3) seemed to refer to the dilemma around transparency regarding how Members are paid but may have referred to sensitivity of confronting a Member whose political competence was under question. Praise was given for previous accomplishments, probably as rhetorical prelude to, "I know we won't agree on this, but I put it out" (P4). Background information was added regarding "an on-going [dynamic with another EU institution]... not here in the report. I tell you in case it comes up in discussion . . . we fear the usual suspects will bring it in" (P2). An assertion of "no foul play" (P1) was expressed from those most closely involved with the actual matter. Finally, a new/breaking concern was shared, including references to previous similar situations and the warning, "this will be the hottest topic for the next months" (P5).

The previous paragraph illustrates that the challenges of understanding apply as well to Members using English as a lingua franca (ELF) as they do to interpreted communication. In this Coordinators' conversation, the subjects and dynamics are so well known to the interpreters that much communication occurs by hint, innuendo, and indirect reference. I was confused at key junctures such as topic shifts and points of decision-making. This was obviously largely due to my outsider status, however I suspect that even general familiarity with the context would not have been enough for full comprehension of everything.

While the general conversation was conducted all in English, there were periodic side conversations in other languages that occurred around the table. The extent to which these involved clarifications of the immediate dialogue or were sidebar commentaries and tangents is unknown. Although the absence of simultaneous interpretation did not seem to adversely affect the communication of the group in the immediate interaction, the scope for understanding and misunderstanding in the upcoming budgetary control Committee meeting was framed by what was understood/misunderstood by Coordinators. Specifically, the indexical (forward-acting) elements and features of discourse included

- identifying deviations from past practice
- predicting political sensitivity and logistical difficulty
- brainstorming issues not in the report but expected to be raised
- sharing perceptions and beliefs regarding identified issues
- outlining the intended goal(s) of amendments, such as *either* the continuation of an historical stance *or* to soften criticism *or* to provide balance, and
- anticipating the tone (key) of amendments and debate as competitive or cooperative.

The Coordinators' previous experience within the Budgetary Control Committee and a history of working together as Coordinators from/for their respective Political Groups generated a congenial atmosphere. The key (tone) of this COCUBU meeting was focused, respectful, efficient and relaxed: collegial. Using English as the lingua franca did not appear to create problems for anyone other than the outside researcher. The function of this group in streamlining and sorting sticking points in the decision-making process was fulfilled.

5.2.3.2 Intergroup Meetings

I was also privileged to observe two intergroup meetings, the Land Use and Food Policy Intergroup (LUFPIG) and the Baltic Intergroup. Intergroups are unofficial, informal groups that gather Members of different Political Groups and Committees to discuss issues of common interest. Assistants also attend, either with or in place of their Member. LUFPIG ran under Chatham House rules of non-attribution; the Baltic Intergroup never mentioned these (at least not in any of the meetings or parts of meetings that I was able to attend).

Because Intergroups are unofficial, interpretation is not provided. Members must choose a common language and work with it. In both groups there were Members with non-fluent English who managed to participate and (apparently) make themselves understood. On this superficial evidence, one could argue there was no need for SI, however the tenor of discussion (Hymes' key) was often critical, challenging, and unapologetic. "The turns," I wrote in my fieldbook, "sound like speeches, not like conversation (impression)."

My field notes describe “direct confrontation; sophisticated matter-of-fact deconstruction of logic behind the Commission’s stance” as LUFPIG Members discussed a draft framework with a representative from the Court of Auditors.¹⁹⁸ “The will to hide a fundamental fact leads to obscure arguments,” said one Member (PA),¹⁹⁹ leading another to assert that the Commission’s stance was “fundamentally untrue” (PB), which led to making a distinction between “the political level” and “the technical level” (PA). There was “no disagreement with the facts” (Pc) but “simplification” (PD) was needed regarding the definition of some terms, in order “to explain down” (PD) to effected individuals in remote locations. The Members discussed “what’s missing” (PA) from the draft as well as what it currently covered, and there was a discussion about “something wrong in the philosophy of the penalty” (PF) to wit: “We agree in principle but [the enforcement] is too weak to influence [the targeted group of people]” (PF).

Describing what was missing and critiquing what was present in the written draft framework involved a high register of political discourse. The term “simplification” itself was identified as needing definition: “No one ever stood up and said I want things to be complicated, [this does] not equal watering down. We have to solve the underlying problems” (PD). An overt linguistic question came up only once, as a matter of curiosity: “how do you say ‘width’ in plural?” (PG). This is quite different than the example shared

¹⁹⁸ The Court of Auditors is an institution external to the European Parliament with the responsibility “to improve EU financial management and report on the use of public funds” (Europa. http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/court-auditors/index_en.htm retrieved 19 March 2014).

¹⁹⁹ As with the Coordinators meeting, participant (P) coding is random and anonymous (PA, PB, etc). While some of these Baltic Intergroup Members did participate in the research; these quotes were collected during observation and in casual conversation either before or after meetings, not during interviews.

with me after the meeting by one of the (non-interviewed) participants, which concerned a resolution “some years ago concerning Israel and Palestine” (PH). The English version included the phrase, “withdraw from the occupied territories” (PH). The Member explained to me how that general statement allows ambiguity not possible in French, wherein it must be specified if one is referring to “all” or “some” territories (PH). Linguistic differences like these are a “source of conflict” (PH).

5.3 In This House: Discourse about Simultaneous Interpretation

Now that the contrast is established between the settings characterized by the formal provision of SI and the Parliamentary settings deemed informal and thus usually not interpreted, we can finally look closely at the discursive tensions revolving around the use of the system of SI in the EP. In terms of social interaction, the two primary activities of Members involve speaking and listening. Because social interaction in the EP is conditioned by intercultural communication, both behaviors require choices: Members choose whether or not to speak their own language or a lingua franca, and Members choose whether or not to use the headphones to listen to colleagues whose languages they do not know. Generally, Members called the official language of their country “my language” or “my mother tongue.” Two of the fifty-five Members interviewed happened to have a native language different than the language of the country they represented as an MEP, but they did not claim their mother tongue (or “father tongue” as one labelled his first, native language) as their principle language in the Parliament.

5.3.1 Speaking in the Mother Tongue

Committee Meetings are usually open to the press and therefore the public, so if interpreting is provided for your language: “In principle, use only your national language” (OM33). Most Members emphasized only the speaking aspect of using the system of SI, but others included listening: “By principle, use the interpreters and listen to [my language’s] interpreters” (OM09). Some Members defined the conditions for using the mother tongue: “If it is for a Hungarian topic, then it is pragmatic for the Hungarian press” (OM28). “Some moments,” explained another Member, “are external. It is absolutely easier to use English or French, but symbolically it is important to speak Polish. This is a political decision” (OM20). Whether persistently or selectively, speaking one’s national language is understood as “a way of saying, ‘I defend my community’” (OM35) and “to show there are other languages” (OM60). Sometimes this seems to be taken as a challenge: “If others are trying to underline their nationality, we will do the same” (NM64), and “At the end of the day, Romanian will be there” (F01).

Members assert “there are many reasons to use your own language” (OM40) and “lots of arguments for it” (OM44). No one disagreed that “the best idea, the best way to express yourself, is in your mother tongue: the nuances, the big subjects, the political ones” (NM02). Reasons are because “the words come easier, the expressions” (OM21), you can be “more literate—using quotations and pictures” (OM07), and “the most obvious, the most important is that everyone can argue better in their mother tongue” (OM22). In practice, however, “You can clearly see the difference between Members from small countries and large countries” (OM25). Specifically, “Old Member States have more confidence to speak their own language than new Member States. They are so used to this tower of Babel” (NM64).

For instance, “if you’re from Bulgaria, Romania, Estonia, Lithuania...you have the fear that people won’t understand you” (F01). At a further extreme, “if we speak Meridian,²⁰⁰ we thought people would think, ‘Oh, he’s stupid!’ (NM64). However, “psychologically, we saw others—Chairs—speaking their language, which is not even popular in Europe, like Dutch” (NM64). Nonetheless, because of the prevalence of mother tongue speakers in the Parliament, “I got the impression that everyone speaks their mother tongue. It gives me prestige [to do so] and the impression that Meridian is equal to others” (OM66).

Despite the benefits of expression and argumentation afforded by speaking in the mother tongue, some Members say “No, no. People don’t listen” (OM31). “If you speak a minority language, people don’t even put their headphones on” (OM66). Because of this widely-observed phenomenon (and others), “Mr [MEP] never talks in his mother tongue, only in English, sometimes in French, to leave aside all potential risks” (F01). The substance of these “risks” is a question at the heart of the European project. By the end of this chapter, the contours of tension should become plain.

Political Groups are not open to the public so there is more latitude for language choice without inviting the external criticism that might come from not using the national language in a Committee Meeting. “If you use English [in Committee] you can be damn sure someone is emailing or calling: ‘Why aren’t you using your own language?’” (OM54). Committee Meetings are sometimes broadcast to the public. They occur in the

²⁰⁰ “Meridian” is a convention invented by Veerle Duflou (in preparation). She uses it to protect interpreters’ confidentiality in her research on norms for interpreters in the European Parliament. Meridian stands in for languages that, if named in context, could give away the identity of the research participant.

room under the FIFO microphone system, which allows for relatively spontaneous interaction among Members. From the interpreters' perspective (in the booth), the FIFO regime in the room is very different than the Plenary sessions in the hemicycle, where it is universal to speak the national language of your own country. "I am most aware of the translation [sic] in Plenary, because this is where there is the most foreign speakers" (OM03). Not to speak your national language during Plenary would be "a PR disaster" (F05). While there may be some constituent fallout from not speaking your own language in a Committee Meeting, Members do sometimes choose a lingua franca that is not their mother tongue. Language choices in the Plenary, however, are almost completely restricted by social and political pressure to speak one's national language.

5.3.1.1 Monolinguals in the European Parliament

As one Member noted rather laconically, "Not everyone is like people from Luxembourg who know three languages" (NM56). Successful monolinguals were presented in what seemed to be a token-like fashion: "I have a Romanian colleague who has no other language really, but communicates very effectively" (NM02). "Some colleagues who are monolingual," explained another MEP, "did very well. They have excellent political advisors and assistants" (OM54). One English-speaking Member admitted, "I never made much of an effort [to learn languages]" (OM44). That Member was a clear exception among the participants in this research, some of whom knew as many as eight languages, with the gross average of 4 1/2 languages known or partially known by MEPs (review Table 5). This "multilingual reality" (as it might be described in EU official jargon) prompted one Member to assert: "There are two kinds of Members: those who speak languages and those who don't. They are excluded. They exclude

themselves and shouldn't come here. The political party should not propose them. It is a waste, even if they are intelligent" (OM20).

The general attitude was expressed less dramatically by other Members: "If you are fluent in another language you can enter the building, otherwise you are outside" (OM60). Likewise, "If you want to be useful here you must be fluent in two languages...to lobby or speak with your colleagues" (NM26). Furthermore, "if you want a career in the upper levels, you must have two plus your own language" (OM54). The contradiction between this expressed norm of multilingualism and the value of communication in one's mother tongue articulates the border between the formal system of SI in the EP provided in the rooms and publicized through the hemicycles, and the informal system where the red lines of decision-making are negotiated and legislation crafted in legal language.

5.3.1.2 A Flaw in the Research? Or a Reflection of the System?

My second language and professional career as an American Sign Language/English interpreter may have facilitated my entry, but it did not help me diversify the pool of action research participants beyond the sphere of English speakers. I had hoped, too optimistically, that this research would warrant active support through the provision of EP interpreters for interviews with non-English speaking Members. That would have allowed the possibility of opening up another kind of practical knowledge from the point-of-view of monolingual Members regarding how they do, in fact, successfully navigate the intercultural communication differences. Such communication access for so-called informal purposes, however, was judged according to the institution's rule-based "balance between the mother tongue and practicality. The

division of formal and informal is very clear” (OM22). This boundary between the formal and informal is upheld by the rules, and above all else, as one administrator emphasized, “this is a house of rules!” (F25).

In other words, the system of SI in the EP has been designed in such a way, through this ‘very clear division’ between the formal and informal levels of social interaction, that it winds up discriminating against monolinguals. “It depends on the rules. It depends on the meetings” (OM59). The *Ad Personam* interpreting services being piloted at the time of this research (2008-2009) is a mechanism that could alleviate some effects of linguistic inequality but only if the EP acts culturally to recognize the value of a monolingual perspective. The bias against monolingualism is an aspect of the intercultural challenge faced by the European project: borrowing a label from the technicians, it is “a human problem.”

The system does only what you tell it to do and it doesn’t make mistakes or quite never makes mistakes, only if there’s a bug or if this bug is arranged. The system, it’s like a calculator. You can key it one million times, two plus two; it always tells you four. It never does something else. (F12)

Of course, “interpreting is not only for monolinguals but people who know other languages, too” (F25). There is something more going on than just a twist of the promotional rhetoric about Member States being able to send their best people regardless of their language profile. While there is definitely an institutional bias against monolinguals built into the infrastructure of EP decision-making practices, there is also social resistance to using interpreters even when it is expedient.

5.3.2 Speaking with a Lingua Franca

The option of using a language other than one's national language/mother tongue is the practical outcome of multilingualism. Lingua francas are spoken by Members in formal meetings where interpreters are provided as well as during informal meetings where professional EP interpreters are not provided. One Member put the dilemma of voice this way: "Whom do you address? Who do you touch with your own words and who through the translator [sic]?" (OM59). Tensions in the discourse about whether or not and when to use one's mother tongue or a lingua franca reveal values and attitudes about interpersonal communication in the intercultural context of the European Parliament. How these influence political negotiations is represented in Table 7 on MEPs' Language Choice Strategies. After I had shared some of my preliminary findings during our second conversation, a Member commented: "Now I start to see why your study is interesting" (OM44). When I followed up in our third conversation, the same Member clarified what was so interesting: "the fact that they [other language speakers] have motives for [their language choices]: there's an agenda behind it, or could be" (OM44).

Being able to distinguish the relative weight of "an agenda" behind a colleague's use of lingua francas is a way to understand the difference between practical and discursive consciousness about the system of SI in the EP. "It is purely political," according to a Member expressing his discursive consciousness, "to speak second and third languages" (OM20). The knowledge that using a lingua franca is just as political as using one's mother tongue appeared, for most Members (based on the way our conversations tended to go), to exist at the level of practical consciousness only. Few Members could explain how, for instance, "it gives an enormous tactical advantage to

negotiate in your second language, if capable. Because [other Members] are so comfortable and confident in their mother tongue” (OM61). At the level of practical consciousness, Members might say, for instance, “if you want to have contacts, then you have to try [to use another tongue]” (OM12).

This interpersonal dimension of communication is reinforced by experience: “It is an asset to know English, French, German. You can make yourself understood, persuade your colleagues, establish personal relations and even friendships” (OM03). Such assertions of valuing the interpersonal dimension of communication are unremarkable in and of themselves. However, in the context of the complaint-ridden anti-discourse about SI in the EP, these sentiments contrast sharply with negative reactions to the suggestion that interpreters could be utilized in the informal situations just as well as the formal ones. “We are not just making statements. We are making laws” (OM57). It is as if the Members’ mission (“They come here to make policy” (F25)) is unrelated to the culture being generated by their interactions. As an outsider, this disconnect seemed obvious but it took a long time to wade through all the themes and realize that this artificial separation of process (social interaction/culture) from outcome (the rule of law/society) comes down to a matter of diction.

5.3.2.1 Plurilingualism, not Multilingualism

Discourse about language policy in the European Union overall clearly influences the discourse about interpreting and languages in the European Parliament. Slippage in the precise use of crucial terminology appears common and acceptable (at least in the language I could access: English). A study on potential linkages of multilingualism with creativity contracted by the European Commission argues, for instance, that the

distinction between *plurilingualism* and *multilingualism* “is significant” (Europublic SCA/CVA 2009: 9) but, despite the recognized significance, these differences “are subsumed under the term ‘multilingualism’ for the purposes of this report” (2009: 4).

Vuorikoski follows suit:

Simultaneous interpreting can be labeled as a sub-category of interlingual translation, its basic function being that of conveying the meaning of the source text, delivered orally in one language, into a target text, delivered orally in another language. With a view to the research material of the present study, focus will be on the aspect of multilingualism as the key motivation for interpretation activity. (2004, p. 51)

Likewise, writing about multilingual management in the European Parliament, Gazzola (2006) reiterates a (by then) decade-old definition: “both [multilingualism and plurilingualism] being defined as referring to the presence or use of more than one language (Clyne, 1997: 301)” (2006: 394). Minimizing the difference between “presence” and “use” is stunning: the conflation is remarkable and significant because the confusion harries the discourse about SI in the EP.

Presence refers to space. Specifically (in the context of languages), presence refers to the condition of proximity of human bodies within the boundaries and borders of a geographic location. Relevant examples from the Parliament include “the room” or “the ‘cycle;” other examples might be a neighbourhood or school. *Use* refers to practice, the human doing of behaviors as applied activity over time. There is a problematic outcome of talking as if presence (in space) and usage (in time) are essentially one-and-the-same-thing. One of these always co-occurring dimensions of communication, space or time, drops out of awareness completely or is reduced to an unquestioned narrow conception. In the discourses about simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament, the temporal dimension is routinely de-selected (cf Burke’s terministic screen). The

discourse dynamic of preferring the word “multilingualism” over “plurilingualism” is a social transaction (Emirbayer, 1997).²⁰¹ The social agreement to say and write multilingualism instead of plurilingualism normalizes, through the ritual of repetition, an exclusive emphasis on only the spatial dimension of communication. Simultaneously, the repetition of the word multilingualism ritualizes ignoring the temporal dimension of communication (explicitly through terminological de-selection of plurilingualism). At the discursive extreme, such normative dynamics of language use train people to forget that another option exists, and can lead to repression of the knowledge that one previously knew and have experienced an option (Billig, 1999).

The fact that the term, multilingualism, is preferred over plurilingualism, even made to substitute and replace plurilingualism, entails comprehensive consequences. The

²⁰¹ Emirbayer (1997) summarizes and elaborates a distinction by Dewey and Bentley (1949, pp. 105, 108, and 111), critiquing the idea of inter-action as a form of substantialist thinking, not as relational as it seems to imply. “Entities remain fixed and unchanging throughout such interaction, each independent of the existence of others, much like billiard balls or the particles in Newtonian mechanics” (p. 285). From a non-substantialist relational perspective, “the very terms or units involved in a transaction derive their meaning, significance, and identity from the (changing) functional roles they play within that transaction” (p. 287). Emirbayer continues: “Relational theorists reject the notion that one can posit discrete, pre-given units such as the individual or society as ultimate starting points of sociological analysis” (p. 287). The premises of this dissertation are relational. Specifically, “the relational point of view sees agency as inseparable from the unfolding dynamics of situations, especially from the problematic features of those situations” (p. 294). It includes “basic assumptions, beginning with the notion that cultural formations entail, not individual ‘attitudes’ or ‘values,’ much less disembodied ‘systems,’ but rather bundles of communications, relations, or transactions” (p. 300). An application of relational theory is Bakhtin’s point of departure: the utterance. “Words, concepts, and symbols derive their meaning only from their location within concrete utterances, but these in turn only make sense in relation to other utterances within ongoing flows of transactions: ‘The utterance is filled with *dialogic overtones*. . . . Each individual utterance is a link in the chain of speech communication. . . .’ (Bakhtin, 1986, pp. 92-93)” (in Emirbayer, 1997, p. 301).

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) states: “Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural *interaction* . . .” (emphasis added, 2001: 168). The emphasis is added because the original (cited here) is misquoted at least twice: in the EC creativity study cited above (2009), and in a (2007) Council of Europe publication that the 2009 EC study attributes as the source for their (mis)quotation of the (2001) CEFR. In both of those (mis)quotations “interaction” is replaced by “action.”

The notion of “intercultural *action*” versus “intercultural *interaction*” may be figural to the current rituals of language choice in the European Parliament. A different choice of diction might further aid clarification. Emirbayer (1997) describes the significant epistemological difference between an interaction and a transaction. Both terms refer to some kind of relationship, but the English word ‘interaction’ implies activity between separate entities as if they are permanently fixed and unchangeable: as if there is a substance to a person or a word that exists regardless of society or language. In a ‘transaction’ all entities are affected and changed (to lesser or greater degrees, but always in some way) because they (e.g., persons and words) are understood as meaningful only and always in relation to others (other people, other words). The conceptual and practical difference of *action between* rather than *transaction among* human agents reinforces the one-dimensional discursive emphasis that Members display regarding communicating *across* the dimension of space rather than communicating *within* the dimension of time.

Of course time is a significant theme in the discourse about SI in the EP, but (as will be seen below) in an extremely narrow way. The spatial emphasis in the discourse

about SI in the EP invokes and reinforces a transmission view of communication (Carey, 1995). That is, it reduces communication to the movement of information from one person (embodied in a physical location) to another person (embodied in another physical location) whether or not these bodies are co-located in the same room or hemicycle or dispersed in different geographic settings.

The ramifications of Members' one-sided practical consciousness about language choice and the use or avoidance of interpretation plays out in historical terms. The American communication scholar James Carey explains: "If the archetypal case of communication under a transmission view is the extension of messages across geography for the purpose of control, the archetypal case under a ritual view is the sacred ceremony that draws persons together in fellowship and commonality" (1999: 15). The themes of discourse regarding SI in the EP reveal a contest regarding which rituals of social interaction should be most honored.

5.3.2.2 Speaking with a Lingua Franca, continued

The caveat of the Member who referred to the tactical advantage of using a lingua franca "if capable" underscores the question of language choice. "Some insist on English and I wish to god they'd use their native language" (OM44). However, many Members believe "it gives a better impression if you speak their language" (OM09) and, "In ordinary situations, it is useful to have one language" (OM29). What constitutes an "ordinary" setting in the plurilingual space of the European Parliament? "Some say using a lingua franca "takes energy and concentration, it is easier to have interpretation everywhere, but this is impossible" (OM12). Others say, "with a default language, you

don't have to listen so hard. You [do] miss some nuances" (NM28). There appears to be general agreement that by "using a lingua franca, you put part of yourself aside" (OM16).

The limitations of a lingua franca include being "stuck saying words that I know, not the words that I want" (NM56) but, despite this, others believe that "the important thing is to get the message, not if the language is perfect" (F11). The double standard of how Members' speaking is evaluated compared with how the Interpreters' renditions are evaluated appears to be unconscious. One Member had the discursive consciousness to recognize the ripple effect: "Anyone speaking a second language is diminished. The range of articulation and meaning is significantly smaller than I would like. The interpreted language is thinner" (NM28). Other Members draw different distinctions: "If you are using language already adjusted to the debate, then it's simple. But if you want to make a complicated speech? Forget it" (OM33).

Of course some Members are equally fluent in more than one language and codeswitching between languages is no issue for them. "Some people freely use their languages" (NM64). Choosing a less fluent language is often considered a matter of politeness. "Some people do lose nuance if they are not speaking their mother tongue, but they do it out of politeness for the Chair" (F30). The politeness ethic is so strong that this leaves many Members "perpetually on the back foot" (NM28). "You can see the hesitation when they speak English or French, but from their own language? It [the mother tongue is] so necessary!" (F02).

5.3.2.3 Informal Meetings and Making Do

As has already been described, "in non-formal situations, [we have] no right to ask for [interpreting]" (NM69). Using a lingua franca in those meetings is considered

more intimate, there is a lower circle of people, he can tell more quicker, is sure of the quality of the verbal communication, he knows what he's saying, knows the interpreter can't make a mistake. It leaves this opportunity out. If there is a misunderstanding he knows it's him, he can't blame the interpreter and tries again." (F17/M41)

The references to speed ("more quicker"), quality, mistakes, misunderstanding, and risk ('to leave this opportunity out') are significant markers in the discourse about SI in the EP. In a way, they anchor the tensions regarding Members' language choices, opening insight into language ideology and the politics of the regime of controlled multilingualism. It turns out that interpreting is not provided to all Members in some formal meetings in addition to the customary denial of SI in the (so-called) informal working groups. For instance, "in the Budget Committee, many can't use their language" (OM33). Sometimes, because a Member is not in an assigned leadership position or otherwise because of how the resources are distributed, there is no interpreting provided "in Group or Committee, where it is most important" (NM64). "It is a problem for smaller countries," elaborated another Member. "We have to ask. The larger ones are always covered" (NM56).

Even those in leadership positions usually have to make do. "Rapporteur and Shadow Rapporteurs are without interpretation. They are negotiating on compromise amendments, this takes place outside of interpretation" (OM03). A Member described a recent experience:

As Rapporteur...[it was] the last meeting. There were many amendments that were not on the list. There was no interpreting. I must discuss in English. It was very difficult. One level is to understand the discussion, but the other is every word, to know what has changed. For this I need interpretation. (NM69)

The importance of words and meanings are recurring themes in the discourse about SI in the EP. Sufficiently fluent multilingual Members, however, do not tend to perceive a problem with the linguistic inequality.

We have excellent interpretation [in general] but...when I'm Rapporteur, in negotiations with the Council and Commission, we use English without interpretation. That was a new experience. I enjoyed it—learning the technical language. (OM07)

Since it is “very rare that you can’t come up with a language no one knows anything about” (OM44), these meetings are “part of our daily work” (OM36), and the rules preclude interpretation on the basis of the formal/informal division, Members may become hesitant to assert their real need for interpretation, instead relying on their assistants and other colleagues.²⁰² “It is hard to ask for an interpreter just for me” (OM62).

“There was a Shadows meeting,” recalled a Member, “a German colleague spoke [and another MEP] translated [sic] for him. The rest spoke English. He told me he would have spoken more with interpreters and explain better” (OM65). Another described a situation where “the French Member would have been more comfortable with an interpreter” (OM09). Speaking about her MEP, an assistant explained: “either he has interpretation or he doesn’t participate. Or, he participates but isn’t motivated. He could say, ‘I’m against that or support that position,’ but not explain why” (F11).

²⁰² The term “real need” occurs in the 2006 European Court of Auditors' *Special Report No 5/2005: Interpretation expenditure incurred by the Parliament, the Commission and the Council*. The phrase, “real need” thus has a politically-defined meaning within the perceived resource environment of the European institutions. This meaning may not converge with the actual needs of real Members.

What happens in these situations is that a non-professional fulfills the function of interpretation. “In an informal meeting, if there is a Frenchman or a German, someone translates [sic]” (OM55). Members “use an assistant or another way to communicate” (NM02). You have to “make sure you have your staff with you to cover all the bases” (OM44). “A French colleague,” for instance, “uses an assistant to make a sequential interpretation” (OM33). If a Member has a real need for interpretation and the system cannot (or will not) provide it, this is

my personal problem. I must arrange [an accommodation] with my personal funds or maybe I can negotiate with the political groups. We already have the funds for office staff. These are complicated arrangements so the need is not so often. (NM27)

And, it does happen that “some Members use personal interpretation: they pay. I could pay” (NM27).

5.3.2.4 English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

As is probably already obvious, “for informal, a lingua franca, now in most cases English” (OM09). These are “small meetings [such as] Members against the Council, [and] multiparty meetings with experts from outside who are specialists in particular fields. They are usually in English, sometimes French or German” (NM64). Members explain: “If I have to find a lingua franca most often it is English” (OM16), and “if there is no interpretation, [the language is] invariably English” (OM45). The justifications for using English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) are as consistent as the criticism against it. “The lone language we are able to use is bad English” (OM35). “Everyone knows we are making mistakes in English” (NM20). It is “awful English. Most of the time you understand that” (OM22). “When we speak together in English it is so bad English”

(OM35). English as a lingua franca (ELF) is a point of humor: “[My Chairperson] has one weakness: he is very bad in English, extremely bad!” (OM31); and a source of pride: “ELF,” claims a Member, “is a European language” (NM28). While some “hope it’s not Brussels English” (NM20), this “seeming English” (OM16) is described as “a special language of communication, Brussels English. It is simplified, international: not a sophisticated grammar” (NM20).

A common assumption is “everybody knows English. The minimum is [my MEP’s] level. And he does fine” (F15/M18). “Most colleagues,” explained another MEP, “are very good with English—Brussels English. The exceptions are Greeks, Portuguese, some Italians. Some French colleagues understand English but won’t use English” (OM36). Indeed not everyone is thrilled with ELF: “What is upsetting me, is English is always in” (OM59). “I don’t like English as a lingua franca, I prefer to speak other languages whenever possible, that are closer to colleagues’ mother tongues” (OM61). “InterParliamentary Delegations are a problem, [because] not all want to use English” (F01). “I prefer more use of the smaller languages, that they would be equally represented. I don’t feel very pro-English language everywhere” (OM06). Based on these sentiments, an ELF-speaking MEP asks, “Is Anglo dominant? Yes, but not so much” (OM08).

Despite some resistance to English (or other languages) as a lingua franca, many Members “force themselves to use a language they know only half-well” (OM40). A Member explains, “English today is the modern Latin, the modern Greek—it is a language of traffic...English is a commodity! Even in China! Even in France!” (OM08). Another Member says, “Of course, if you cannot speak English you are handicapped”

(OM09). “The common language in this place,” explains a permanent EP official, “is English. It rocketed in significance since 2004. The younger generation has very strong English and are weak French” (F04). “Speak English if you want to be heard!” insists another Member. “Who understands Meridian? Nobody! Forget it! A Polish man? [sic] A French?” (OM31). One perception is, “When you speak English you’re okay, you get by in all the meetings” (NM24), however others say, “If you’re not perfect English, then they are not interested in your ideas” (NM27). There are Members for which “you have to concentrate on his English, it’s probably his fourth language—he’s slow and rusty. But he can make himself understood” (OM28).

The values associated with speaking ELF, the reasons Members’ give for using English as a lingua franca, often highlight a presumption of understanding. “My Member prefers English because he knows if he tells it there will be no misunderstanding” (F02). Other Members agree: “If you use English, it’s easier” (OM33). “It’s absolutely easier to use English or French, English is understood better, quicker. I use it with staff—it is pragmatic—they all use English” (OM20). Another assistant expands, “It is easier to communicate in English, the message gets through better, all the details. And for efficiency. Even rhetorically we can make a show about something” (F05). Members’ experiences in non-interpreted meetings where they have to use ELF (or another lingua franca) reinforce the choice to keep using ELF even when interpretation is provided. “Interpretation from Meridian is, um, not so good sometimes. [My MEP] prefers English because he knows if he tells it there will be no misunderstanding” (F02).

Nonetheless, some Members remain dissatisfied with ELF. “The assumption is English would be the easiest. It facilitates the dialogue...to express in a common

language” (F01). But “maybe,” says another permanent staff official, “everybody speaks English but not in the same way” (F06). For one thing, “ELF speakers have “a great problem with native speakers of English and German—their accent, vocabulary, speed...” (NM27). Speaking of speed, “We don’t have that much time,” adds another, “we can speak quicker in English” (OM42). Clarifying the choice even further, “I speak English not to rely on the native language,” explains an official with one of the Secretariats, “because I can’t control the interpretation” (F34).

5.3.3 Control (Loss Of)

The specific word, ‘control,’ was not always used by Members; when it was said the context was usually accusatory, e.g., “the interpreter can take control of the flow” (OM42). Instead, the main word that riddles the discourse is ‘loss.’ “I don’t want to be misunderstood. I don’t want the interpreters, because of German,²⁰³ to lose information” (OM08). Assumptions about the value of understanding and the significance of information are deep and seemingly unquestioned. “Even ideally we are losing 10-15% of understanding the content with interpreting” (OM20). The emphasis on information reinforces the spatial analysis presented above, specifically, how the discourse about SI in

²⁰³ This sentiment is common to Members no matter what language, but German syntax presents a special challenge because the verb specifying the relations among subjects and objects comes at the end of the sentence. Also, e.g., “The verbal humor exploited by the speaker in isolating the concept ‘*Außen*’ (‘foreign’) without the second element ‘*Politik*’ (‘policy’) is rather literary, or at least understandable to the listeners of German only. In such instances, interpreters would have to fill in some additional words in order to make the syntax acceptable. Yet there is usually no time for such editing, as this would prevent the interpreters from attending to the next incoming unit. None of the three interpreters conveyed this unit of the argument” (Vuorikoski, 20204, p. 168).

the EP prioritizes the transmission of information across space rather than considering the implications of repetitive behavior (ritual) on identities and relationships (culture) over time. The value placed on (automatic) understanding rides on another deep assumption. Specifically, Briankle Chang (1996) argues that it is just as legitimate to comprehend and build relationships from the starting point of misunderstanding as it is to base interaction upon initial assumptions of common understanding.

Some Members display empathy: “It is not easy for the interpreters to deliver the message, complete and accurate” (OM06), and “Interpreters must be in a horrible dilemma: they have to choose a meaning then next sentence, oops!” (OM42). In terms of evaluating interpreting performance, experiences range from critical through inconsequential to genuine appreciation. Critically, Members say: “I don’t know, it is very difficult to decide [about the quality of interpretation]. It is case-by-case” (OM29) and “What we are doing here demands a lot of nuance. Sometimes the interpreting is mediocre and sometimes much worse than that” (OM57). More neutrally, other Members say: “We simply take it for granted that the service is there” (OM16], and “simultaneous translation [sic] creates problems, but it is astonishing that the number of real blunders is that low (OM03). Many Members and permanent staff say: “The whole system works really well. You would assume there would be more problems but it’s really rare” (F07); “The quality of the translation [sic] is quite good here, and also the quality of the interpreters—they are fantastic people” (OM59); “We do have extremely good teams of interpreters. We can’t fault the interpreters or the services they provide” (F30); and “There is much better quality here than anywhere else” (OM20).

Member concern with misunderstanding and loss of content (information) are among the main motivating factors for choosing English as lingua franca. The general sense is that with ELF, “I can be completely certain that what I say reaches the ones who are listening...to the English—and sometimes in the translation [sic] too” (OM42). Again, the question of listening is intimately intertwined with language choice as a demonstration of respect (or lack of respect) and appreciation for linguistic diversity.

5.3.3.1 The Headphone Challenge

“You cannot,” a Secretariat official insisted, “use headphone use as a measure of listening—Members are multiply fluent” (F30). As described previously, I made an effort to track headphone use in the meetings I observed. It is certainly true that there can be no direct equation made between wearing a headphone (or not wearing one) and listening or not listening. “If Members are not interested in the report,” the same official continued, “they will chat with their friends but still want their friends to pay attention to their report!” (F30). “They only put on the headphones,” she concluded, “for those they don’t understand” (F30). “We are very, very clear on what we want to do,” this Member expands the observation: “Those who have interest follow. They will reply and you can tell if they understand” (OM31).²⁰⁴

Nonetheless, Members do evaluate the use of headphones by colleagues as a measure of attention. I repeatedly observed what this Member said: “Most Members sit without headphones” (OM43). For instance, in the AFET meetings I observed, I noted

²⁰⁴ This is a rare expression of discursive consciousness about the process of plurilingual communication (i.e., involving interpreters).

- 1 “a small rustle of movement” (quoting my fieldnotes) as MEPs reached for headsets as a German colleague began to speak;
- 2 only the Chairperson reaching for a headset (within my range of vision) when a Hungarian colleague announced, “I will speak in my mother tongue;” and
- 3 about 50% of Members within my field of vision continuing to wearing headsets during the Chairperson’s response, in English, to a speech made in Tajikistan by the Tajikistani President.

Computer technology *could* be designed and programmed to monitor Member’s use of headphones and microphones, including what channel they’re speaking or listening to, how much of time, etc., but sources were very clear that this would be an unacceptable violation of privacy with too much potential for political misuse.

During the AFET observations, as with many others, I jotted down that “the headphones are giving me a headache. Squeezing too hard! Hurts ear and presses on my brain. Swapping ears helps (one on/one off method).” Agreeing with my observation that the earphones hurt, a technician told me, “They are quite unbreakable...the only thing I am happy these headphones are here is because nobody wants to steal them” (F12). One Member’s conjecture about why colleagues avoid earphone use was gender-based: “I think he [referring to male MEPs in general] is ashamed to use a headset, to show that you don’t understand” (OM40). Other Members refer to EFL: if you have “a short reply, try to do it in English. The Chair is English—it’s easier. Otherwise they have to take the earphones, listen and understand, and sometimes they misunderstand” (NM64).

The discourse makes it seem as if misunderstanding *only* happens when interpretation is involved. A Member (not interviewed) spoke during a Committee meeting: “If it will be easier in English, I can read the question in English? I speak in Polish if there is an interpretation.” There is a time element embedded in the courtesy of

notifying colleagues about the language choice so they can don the headphones if they are interested in the topic.

The time component is emphasized if there is a need for *relay*. During a Committee meeting, a Slovenian Member was given the floor and began speaking then stopped, waiting...the Chair said, “It must be the *relay*.” With or without *relay* however, some Members are absolutely explicit about the discrimination: “Colleagues don’t put their headphones on when an arcane language is being spoken. It is postcolonial disdain” (OM28). “Can I use Danish here?” another Member inquired in English. I note that apparently the answer was ‘yes’ as he proceeded to speak in Danish. At least half-a-dozen of his colleagues in AFET did not put on their earphones. Then I realized he was one of the Members I had interviewed, and surmised that he was providing this demonstration for my benefit, which he later confirmed so I could witness the non-cooperation and disinterest in using the headphones/listening to colleagues speaking so-called ‘arcane’ or ‘exotic’ languages. “I did it for you,” he explained, grinning.

Not long afterwards a Member who I never spoke with was called upon to give her report as Rapporteur. She opened with a sentence in Dutch followed by English, “I will speak in Dutch.” I record in my notes “a murmur through the room that sounded like disappointment: a collective groan.” The Rapporteur did proceed in Dutch and it appeared nearly all of the Members were wearing headphones. Perhaps there was a difference in substance or relevance between her topic and the Danish Member’s topic in the preceding example. Later, the Dutch Member responded to her colleagues’ questions in English.

Clearly there is social pressure to avoid the headphones and, by extension (or perhaps it is the other way around) to minimize reliance on interpretation. As articulated by this Member: “I don’t like to be a prisoner of language” (NM25). Such dramatic framings and a consistent emphasis on the loss of control characterize much of the discourse about SI in the EP. Given the emphasis on not using earphones, and the list of reasons justifying this non-use, I began to wonder what message is sent by actually using the headphones? “I sometimes use two headphones,” bragged one Member. “Often I am able to guess what they say. Maybe I am automatically filling in? I am not worried about it” (OM31). “You have to take your earphones and listen. This is not a demonstration of incompetence,” insists another (NM64). “Make sure and listen to everyone around the room” instructs a third: “There is nothing worse than to not listen” (OM44).

In principle, headphone use shows the readiness to listen to a colleague you do not understand. Listening, in the European Parliament, to the simultaneous interpretation of a language you do not know is the ultimate measure of plurilingualism. In contrast with ELF, which creates an illusion of shared language but still involves insiders (who know the lingua franca) and outsiders (who do not), wearing earphones and learning to communicate through the system of SI in the EP is the ultimate expression of support for cultural difference. Although the use of a lingua franca, such as ELF, is presented as a relational move, plurilingualism through interpretation is a step beyond serial monolingualism (aka, multilingualism) because it preserves difference and enables relationship *simultaneously*. Rather than reinforcing the use of a common language as the only way to demonstrate and experience the phatic qualities of communication, skillful and strategic use of SI in the EP could establish the ritual basis for a common European

identity by invoking community in a new way. This new and alternative kind of being-present-with-each-other-while-using-different-languages invites a systemic re-balancing of the spatial and temporal elements of communication. Many languages, used at the same time, in the same place, among people communicating with each other enables meanings, understandings and relationships to be created and regenerated across nationalized boundaries of difference. A new equilibrium can be achieved by shifting the basis of identification from language and information to social transaction and interpreted, plurilingual communication.

5.3.3.2 Re-Learning How to Speak

“I admire [the interpreters] for what they are doing. I know how difficult it is. I listen to colleagues: some of them are brilliant. Some are not clear in any language. You can’t get a better interpretation than the source” (OM61). Along the same lines, “In Committee, on the whole, it is possible to follow the argument. Sometimes, I don’t know if it is the interpreting that is inadequate or the Member who is inadequate” (OM44). Generating the source language for simultaneous interpretation has become a matter of discursive consciousness. “At the beginning of term,” explains a Member, “people think about it, about being clear and not too complicated. After several months they get used to it. We learn how to speak to be understood: as brief as possible, as clear as possible” (OM20). Another confirms: “I started with complicated language. Over the years, I came down, to spell down things so that twelve-year-old can understand. Far from where I started” (OM61). “My wording,” says another, “is simple, not complicated” (OM62).

“We’re not using a sophisticated language,” continues another. “You want to get your point. Use short sentences, simple words. You’re used to tv and radio—you have

fifty seconds, be short and clear. Don't use strange words" (OM31). The soundbyte mentality applies to mother tongue as well as ELF, and explicitly privileges the transmission/spatial dimension of communication: it is information-centric. Relationally, one Member explained that "You can ask to repeat if you think it is possible to mend [a misunderstanding]. But if [a colleague] thinks he is understandable [and he is not], people will ignore him and he will have to learn the hard way. This happens with native language too, if you come at people out of the blue" (OM33). "You have a short time," says another Member, and therefore "must give a clear message. After one to two years people stop thinking about the form they use. Some deputies [the original label for MEPs] never achieve this, but the majority do" (OM20).

As a kind of thought experiment, I asked a technician about the possibility of an interpreter asking a Member to clarify what he or she meant before plunging into an uncertain rendering: "Oh, to interact," he replied. "The machine is not made to offer this possibility" (F12). "The machine cuts that off?" I wondered. "The machine doesn't cut nothing," he asserted. "If the human expressed the need of this possibility, the machine can offer this possibility" (F12). Some Members express ultimate belief in a technological solution, e.g., "We won't need interpreters in the future because of machine translation" (OM35); but someone else mentioned off the record that "there was an experiment with machines ...it was such a failure." Other Members pinpoint "the real problem is the time limit. You have to be concise, to the point" (OM08). Encompassing ELF, other lingua francas, mother tongues and the electronic technology, a Member claimed: "The instruments are not very important. Being in the mainstream...you have

just one instant, one moment to come, to be in the center or this possibility is lost” (OM20).

5.3.3.3 Time

The perceived need to control time is the hidden ideology that justifies complaints about misunderstanding. Misunderstandings are a scapegoat, framed as impediments to the pace of communication. “The interpreting is a very good thing. They are strongly in place: when they stop, everything stops” (NM26). Understood as “the most organized workforce in the institution” (F04), some other permanent Parliament staff resent that “interpreters have power” (F04). Although interpreters are constrained from intervening in misunderstandings, “they will stop if it is too fast” (OM35). According to a technician,

The president of the room...has a *Slow Down* light. If interpreters think the speaker is speaking too fast, so maybe speaks like this, ‘Blahblahblah [speaking very fast],’ and they can’t follow the speaking, they have a button on their desk that gives a signal to the president and blinks this letter, so the president has to know. He has to say to the speaker, ‘Please slow down because the interpreters can’t follow you.’ This system is programmed that at least two interpreter desks have to press the Slow Down button to give the signal...it could be two people in the same booth [or in different booths]...to be sure that the one didn’t press the button just like this [demonstrating brushing over it by accident.] (F12)

During more than thirty hours of simultaneously-interpreted meetings, I observed only a handful of requests from a Chairperson asking colleagues to slow down for the sake of interpretation.

European Parliament Interpreters keep pace with the typical rate of speech. Members express two sides of the same coin: on one side, “When it’s slow, it becomes tedious” (OM44); on the other, “You have no time. The regime here is such...first you have to get the speaking time from the Group...the Liberals [in this Member’s particular

context] have seven minutes to speak, for all others only one to two minutes. You can't say, 'No, you didn't understand me'" (NM64). Another Member concurs: it is "not only a language issues... Yesterday I had two minutes, sometimes only one minute. I am lucky if I get three minutes" (OM42). "The scarcity of time in an institution like this" (OM03) is taken for granted. "If you add thirty seconds per speaker for interpretation, that increases the meeting by three hours while [also] eliminating three topics" (OM03). This is the reason justifying why "most use English even though there is interpretation: it hastens things up, doesn't create delays" (NM24). "Sometimes the English [interpretation] is slow," says another Member, giving a different twist to the constitution of time: "then I listen in French. For instance with the Greek President, it is difficult to keep track, especially when he is going fast" (NM28).

"If Greek is spoken," explained another Member, "then you have the *pivot*. All the translations [sic] are delayed" (NM26). There can be "an uncomfortable hiatus," which one Member likened to "dead air [being] the worst thing you can have on the radio" (OM44). This is born out by at least one Member's overt impatience: "I have no time for waiting! The interpretation is taking too long. There is too much time waiting" (NM01). Others disagree: "Concerns about timing are not really valid," expressed an administration official, "there is no time loss" (F25). A Member agrees, "there is some delay, in some cases but it does not hinder work or listening" (OM07). Others are even more blasé: "I never think about time. I am so occupied with listening and learning languages" (OM40). The relationship between language choice and time was best summarized by this Member: "You have no time to think about language: you have to

take part in the debate. Sometimes it is better, necessary to use your own language. And sometimes another” (OM20).

The relentless pace shows up most problematically in two ways. “Sometimes,” one Member said, “people use language to get more power, if we have to move rapidly...sometimes this [multilingualism] is misused” (NM54). A few may be offended when “they cut off things [a colleague] had to say” (OM03). The most obvious breakdown of what controlled multilingualism is the way it is performed during voting. Here, a Member said, “the time delay is insurmountable” (NM28). “Votes are moving at a high rate,” explains an MEP, “600 votes in three hours. If inaccurately interpreted—it can throw you off and you’re lost for six votes before you find your place” (OM44).

Another Member explained,

Today during the vote, I can’t follow the Dutch translation and I don’t understand the Spanish [spoken by the Chairperson]. I tried English. After five minutes I switched. I switched five times and always too late, and sometimes the numbers were wrong. Visually, I can follow who is in front, if they vote For [he raises his hand], then I [raises his hand], but if they vote Against, then I am too late. (OM31)

Forcing Members to guess at the timing of yes/no votes by relying on visual cues from other Members is probably not in the best interests of European democracy.

In this chapter, I have presented the discourse about the system of SI in the EP in a way to let it speak for itself. The major themes have all been introduced: the use of one’s own language/mother tongue or a lingua franca, EFL, Member control of diction (words and meanings) as well mistakes and misunderstandings, risk, quality and speed. The question of marginalizing monolinguals has been raised, the application of multilingualism problematized, and the concept of plurilingualism introduced. Before elaborating the findings and presenting the conclusion, it is necessary to place the

institution of the Parliament and the system of SI in the EP in historical time. Although the once-vaunted European Constitution failed,²⁰⁵ a quote about it serves as the discursive bridge for placing the current discourse about SI in the EP in its most relevant historical timestream (Neustadt and May, 1986):

We [the European Parliament] organized the Convention Debates, we organized the Charter Debates. In fact, the success of the Charter led the Heads of certain governments at the Summit to decide to have a Convention on the future of Europe, and that is the genesis of the Constitution. And I don't think we can say that it was very very successful and it took place in eleven languages...and then say multilingualism had nothing to do with the success of that particular formula. Everyone is respected if they are allowed to speak their own language. (F38, in 2005)

Compare the sentiments in that quotation with this one, from a book review of *The Origins of Simultaneous Interpretation* by Frances Gaiba (1998):

It is no exaggeration to say that without simultaneous interpretation, the 1945-1946 multilingual Nuremberg trial of major figures of the Nazi regime could not have taken place... for the interpreting profession, it was an exemplary—and almost unparalleled—instance of human and technical triumph over the linguistic obstacles that can otherwise impede the implementation of the loftiest sentiments of fairness. (Morris, 1999)

Vuorikoski also echoes the sentiment:

It has been said that Europe is on everyone's lips, but in different languages. Preserving the cultural identity of the Member States has been considered essential in the European context, and one way of maintaining cultural identity has been the language policy which guarantees the official languages of the Member States the status of an official language in the European Union as well. A plurality of cultures has been experienced as a value that the community does not

²⁰⁵ Referendum votes from France and Belgium went against the Treaty during the first research period (May 2005). The sense of disappointment in Parliament's halls was palpable, but Members remained resolute. They found another way to consolidate the European Union with the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force with some fanfare during the second research period (2009) by linking it to the European Parliament's 50th anniversary.

want to surrender; instead, the many ways of thinking have been seen as a challenge rather than a handicap. (Zeyringer 1991: 7) In fact, the European communities are the only international community where the languages of all the Member States enjoy the status of an official language. This policy has been seen to act as a safeguard for political and legal equality, as citizens are able to follow the functioning of the institutions in their own language. (Ramos-Ruano 1991: 61–65)” (in Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 73).

The system initiated at Nuremberg has evolved in sophistication and capacity to enable the regime of controlled multilingualism at the European Parliament. It also has had a serious effect upon Deaf communities and other linguistic minorities who require interpreting at the interface of their daily lives and the major institutions of society. The next chapter will explore this history, beginning at Nuremberg and then providing a case history of professional interpreting and American Deaf Culture.

CHAPTER 6

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF A SYSTEM OF SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION

6.1 Timestream Placement of the Discourse about SI in the EP

Placement is Neustadt and May's (1986) term for the locating an organization in its proper historical timestream.

To link conventional wisdoms of the present with past counterparts and future possibilities; to link interpretations of the past with the experiences of their interpreters, and both with their prescriptions; to link proposals for the future with the inhibitions of the present and inheritances of the past - all these mean to think relatively and in terms of time, opening one's mind to possibilities as far back as the story's start and to potentialities as far ahead as relevant (judged, of course, from now, hence subject to revision later). That entails seeing time as a stream. It calls for thinking of the future as emergent from the past and of the present as a channel that perhaps conveys, perhaps deflects, but cannot stop the flow. (Conveys? Deflects? In what degree? A critical concern!) Perception of time-in-flow cannot help but be encouraged by purposeful study of stretches of history, regardless of whose it is or what the focus" (1986: 246).

Recall the concept of indexicality, which refers to the forward-acting impulse of language use in the present. Looking backwards, at the time of utterance and enactment, indexicalities are entailments²⁰⁶ that shape social transactions through their persistence in language use.

²⁰⁶ Entailment is the long tail of indexicality, the social meanings which always accompany referential/denotational meaning. "Through indexicality, every utterance tells something about the person who utters it - man, woman, young, old, educated, from a particular region, or belonging to a particular group, etc. - and about the kind of person we encounter - we make character judgments all the time..." (Blommaert, 2004, p. 11).

6.1.1 Nuremburg: The Originating Scene

The possibility of generating mutual understanding among the four languages of plaintiffs and defendants after WWII was weighed from the beginning against a need for speed, yet the ramifications of this tension have received practically no investigation. Scholarship on the Nuremberg International War Crimes Tribunal is extensive. However, as of 1998, Gaiba estimated only a dozen pages involved interpreting; these are spread across a mere four sources: Conot, 1983; Neave, 1978; Persico, 1994; and Tusa & Tusa, 1983. The absence of interpreting from historical analysis is interesting precisely because everyone was concerned with how long the Nuremberg trials could take because of the language differences. “The language problem had surfaced as soon as the talks began in London” (Persico, 1994, p. 53). The attitude that language difference is a problem was commonsense: consecutive interpretation would simply take too long.

Regarded as the birthplace of professional simultaneous interpretation, for our analysis what is important is that the crucible of an international court of law for crimes against humanity established the exemplar for the performance of simultaneous interpreting in all settings. Requirements imposed on Nuremberg interpreters were dictated by unquestioned imperatives concerning speed, expectations for accuracy based largely on a myth of linguistic equivalence, and the ability of humans to interface seamlessly with electronic technology.

Cast as “this dumb idea that the Americans were putting on” (Gaskin, 1990, p. 85), the solution to the language problem was generated by an interpreter. Colonel Léon Dostert had interpreted for General Eisenhower, and for both “the German Army, occupying his town during the First World War and for the American Army which liberated it” (Gaiba, 1998, pp. 133-134). An American military officer born in France,

Dostert contacted two officials close to Chief Justice Robert H. Jackson and arranged with IBM to provide a demonstration to Chief Justice Jackson's aide (Charles Horsky) and his son Bill, convincing them of the idea (Persico, 1994).

Whether Dostert had a flash of insight (spawned, perhaps, by his experiences as an immigrant), reasoned his way through the juxtaposition of time with plurilingualism, or simply extended the knowledge he had of the recently patented Filene-Finlay equipment being built and distributed by IBM (Gaiba, 1998), somehow Dostert realized that the new "IBM System" (Tusa & Tusa, 1983) could enable interpretation to be conducted in parallel, that is, simultaneously, rather than in sequence (consecutively). "Our work in Nuremberg was based essentially on the Filene-Finlay system" (Uiberall, as cited in Gaskin, 1990, p. 43-44). Siegfried Ramler, another long-term Nuremberg interpreter, described the need "to make trial proceedings and documents understandable to judges, prosecutors, defendants, and defense counsel in Courtroom 600 [of the Nuremberg Palace of Justice], as well as to audiences around the world following the proceedings?" (2008, p. 50). Others credited the engineers:

There was a primary difference between the subsequent trials and the international. The international was [run by the] four powers, and there had to be [simultaneous translation [sic] in] four different languages, and that is a big job. It wouldn't have been done at all except for the ingenuity of IBM engineers. They made possible the simultaneous translation [sic] system, provided earphones for every seat in the courtroom.

The subsequent trials, although they were international trials in the sense that they were done under international law, were all American, so that we only had the simultaneous translation [sic] of German/English and English/German, and that simplified things a great deal from the administrative point of view. (Robert King, in Stave et al, 1998, p. 159)

The subsequent trials are instances of community interpreting; there was also community interpreting at Nuremberg (see Section 6.1.7).

Neglecting mention of community interpreting in the historical record, and/or hiding it within the duties of translators, is one of the ways that dehumanization became embedded as a control mechanism for simultaneous interpretation. The emphasis on information *contained in the language* is another tactic of dehumanization that was necessary for the trials to be conducted. By separating information from the person, communication could occur without regard for the Other. In this case, a most despicable “other” (in the bodies of the defendants) but also for everyone associated with the trial in any capacity: victims, rescuers, bystanders, uncharged perpetrators, etc.

6.1.2 The IBM System

There was anxiety about getting the system in place. “The equipment went astray” during shipping (Tusa & Tusa, 1983, p. 218) and “everything depended on having the interpreting system in place on opening day” (Persico, 1994, 12). When it did arrive, only three weeks in advance (Gaiba, 1998, p. 39), “the British Signal Corps did all the wiring, and laid many miles of wiring in there. It was a very sophisticated network” (Chapman, in Gaskin, 1990, p. 93). Dan Kiley, who designed the layout of the courtroom and built the interpreters booths along with some other specific furniture, described it as “a quadrilingual translation [*sic*] system. Earphones, and so forth” (in Stave et al, 1998, p. 26). While the wiring was being installed, the interpreters were playing at a mock trial in the courtroom’s attic. “We played various roles which we had to guess at because no one had seen a war crimes trial before. . . . we discovered a number of things that we had not thought of before” (Uiberall, in Gaskin, p. 42-43). In a review of Gaiba’s *The Origins of Simultaneous Interpretation*, Morris summarized the complicated process this way:

Those responsible for the arrangements as they affected the interpreters tried to ensure that the latter had the best possible conditions for their work, subject to time and space constraints. Having dared take the risk of making use of an untried approach - the 'simultaneous' technique had been used in the pre-war period only for the reading out of pre-translated versions of speeches or simultaneously providing multiple-language versions of consecutive interpretation - they tried to build in as many measures as possible to enable the interpreters to do the best job possible. They also recognized the human element. Arrangements were made to provide discreet signals when a speaker needed to slow down, or if it became necessary to interrupt the proceedings for reasons related to interpretation. A monitor in the courtroom constantly kept an ear on all working interpreters, and was prepared to replace anyone who showed signs of fatigue, if necessary interrupting the proceedings to do so. (1999, p. 352)

One of the most prominent features of the IBM system as it was used during the Nuremberg trials was awareness of and attention to the social implications of using the brand new technology. Acknowledging these implications required participation by interpretees: speakers and listeners were actively involved in the overall facilitation of the simultaneous interpretation process.

Alfred Steer, Administrative Head of the Language Division at the trials, explained: "We had a system of two lights: a yellow one meaning 'Please slow down,' and a red one meaning 'Please stop the proceedings momentarily'" (Gaskin, 1990, p. 38).²⁰⁷ The lights were an outcome of the mock trials:

In the first place, there is a certain speed beyond which you cannot possibly hear and talk, so there had to be a system to keep people from getting too fast. Then someone came up with the idea of light signals: a

²⁰⁷ Ramler describes three lights (or calls one two different colors): "As with traffic, we developed a system of orange and red lights which would be flashed by the monitor, signalling speakers in the courtroom. The yellow light was a signal to slow down and to prevent two parties from speaking at the same time. The red light, used sparingly, gave a sign to the presiding judge to declare a recess" (2008, p. 51-52).

yellow light coming on for ‘slow down’, and a red one for ‘stop’. The latter was for situations where the interpreter could not carry on because he had a coughing spell or something – it happened once or twice – and then you pushed the red button, and everything stopped until you were ready to go on. (Uiberall, as cited in Gaskin, 1990, p. 43)

The role of a monitor was invented to watch for impending interpreter failure.

“Occasionally an interpreter would freeze,” Ramler explains, “either because of a translation [sic] difficulty or because of a shock effect arising from the nature of the testimony” (2008, p. 50). The monitor sat very close to the currently-working interpreter because “sometimes it was possible to step in and help” (Uiberall, in Gaskin, p. 43). Administrator Steer described how it worked: “I’d press the red one, which was in front of Lord Justice Lawrence, he would stop everything and I’d make the shift” (Gaskin, 1990, p. 38). Ramler says, “The interpreters at the microphone appreciated [Lawrence’s] understanding of the challenges we faced and his admonition to counsel and witnesses to speak slowly” (2008, p. 49).

Most surprising (looking back from today’s standard practice), the following was widely understood and accepted:

Interpreting in these cases had a lot of pitfalls, and very often at the end of the day we [interpreters] were not exactly overjoyed at the way it came through. We would run upstairs to the reviewing people and say, ‘Hey, that wasn’t exactly the best way to do it. Have you checked that?’ You had a lot of safeguards against mistranslations—I don’t think any that occurred remained in the transcript. (Uiberall, as cited in Gaskin, p. 47)

The reviewing process was the work of a third team of interpreters (Gaiba, 1998; Gaskin 1990). Peter Uiberall, “one of the longest-serving interpreters at the Nuremberg Trials” (Morris, 1999, p. 351), says it was a fight to convince the personnel people to allow the third team (Gaiba, 1998). Interpreter monitors (known as *team interpreters* in the field of

community interpreting today) and transcript reviewers were communication accommodations made in recognition that “the human element” (Morris, 1999, p. 352) had to be taken into account, including the effects of time pressure on spontaneous performance.

Making corrections and edits in the record after the fact was an embedded aspect of the Nuremberg precedent. “Upstairs in the court-house we had a section which was called the reviewing section, where the transcript of the preceding day was gone over by interpreters of the third team” (Gaskin, 1990, p. 45). Uiberall continued to describe the teamwork functions of the interpreters:

It was absolutely necessary to have three teams of interpreters: two teams alternated in the court-room, with one team on stand-by in the radio room behind, with phone connection [ready to relieve failing interpreters], and the third team was up in the reviewing section, going over the previous day’s transcript word for word: hearing the original, seeing the text of the translation [sic] and correcting it. (Gaskin 1990, p. 45)

It was not unusual for the interpreters to receive help from others in the courtroom. Besides debates over meaning among the legal counsel, Uiberall explained how defendants in particular were highly attuned to the interpreters when he said:

Whenever an interpreter got stuck on some technical term that a German witness used, you would see either Speer or Schacht or both quickly whip out a piece of paper, write the English term on it, and send it along the line to the defendant who was sitting closest to the interpreter, who slipped it under the glass partition. So we were grateful to them. They were interested in good translation [sic], as we were, and were helping where they could.” (Gaskin, 1990, p. 84)

Additionally, “many of the German lawyers understood English, monitored our interpretation, and occasionally would object if they thought a given translation [sic] was in error” (Ramler, 2008, p. 49).

6.1.3 Interpreters on Trial

IBM was “eager to pioneer the world’s first system of simultaneous interpretation” (Persico, 1994, p. 54), which they called the International Translator System (Tusa & Tusa, 1983, p. 110). The IBM System enabled up to five different languages to be transmitted along separate audio channels; the human beings required to produce the essential interpretations of the languages distributed across those channels were the last addition to this revolutionary technology. “The system would only work,” explained Chief Justice Jackson’s executive, Brigadier General Gill, “if every delegation recruited top-notch interpreters” (Gaiba, 1998, p. 45).

Discovering individuals able to operationalize IBM’s technology so that it could function as desired proved difficult. “Only one prospect in twenty had the mental agility to listen and talk at the same time” (Persico, 1994, p. 112). The requirements applied to prospective interpreters were as strict as those applied to the electronics. The skillset required for simultaneous interpreting was quickly differentiated from the skills required for a) consecutive interpreting, which utilizes notetaking and allows an interpreter to work with whole messages rather than fragments; and b) translating written texts, which occurs ‘off-line’ and ‘behind-the-scenes’ at the translator’s individual pace (Gaiba, 1998). Seigfried Ramler, an interpreter at Nuremberg, explained that simultaneous interpreting “called for the ability to think of the second best word instantly, or the third best word, because you could not afford to stop” (U.S. Courts, 2010).

By his own account, Steer in his administrative capacity tested approximately 400 potential interpreters, having the most success with individuals from small countries such as Belgium and Holland or who worked in telephone services:

The Paris international telephone exchange was a superb place to pick people up, because they had to deal with conversations in all languages. But I found that only about five per cent of experienced [consecutive] interpreters could do this Nuremberg job, because of the nervous control that was needed, and because it was simultaneous. (Gaskin, 1990, p. 39)

Uiberall emphasized the significance of the time element: “Before 1945, simultaneous interpretation had not existed in the form in which we used it at Nuremberg. . . . something entirely new had come up: we had to do *spontaneous* interpretation, *immediate* interpretation” (Gaskin, 1990, p. 43-44). A mixture of concern, discomfort, and skepticism led planners of the tribunal to doubt this new means of manipulating time (Gaiba, 1998, p. 37). “The decision to use it at the trial was hard to take because no delegation felt comfortable with the multilingual character of the trial and most believed at first that simultaneous interpretation would not work at all” (Gaiba, p. 32). Indeed, “it was hardly credible that one system could provide access to five languages, and beyond imagining that translations [sic] would ever be able to keep up with the proceedings” (Tusa & Tusa, 1983, p. 110).

6.1.4 The Ideology of Speed

The ideology of speed is only touched upon here, but it completely infiltrates the interpreter’s role space²⁰⁸ and functional production. Griffiths (2004) briefly summarized an early champion of “the cult of speed” (p. 52), referring to Italian futurist Marinetti’s *New Religion-Morality of Speed* (1916), where he writes of “a new good: speed, and a

²⁰⁸ The concept of a multidimensional “role space” (Lee & Lewellyn-Jones, 2013) replaces the inaccurate and unnecessarily restrictive concept of interpreters’ “role.” Role space will be elaborated later in this chapter.

new evil: slowness” because “slowness is naturally foul” (p. 52). Griffiths also quoted a critic:

Paul Virilio writes in *Speed and Politics* (1986) that “Western man has appeared superior and dominant, despite inferior demographics, because he appeared *more rapid*. In colonial genocide or ethnocide, he was the *survivor* because he was in fact super-quick (*sur-vif*). The French word *vif*, ‘lively,’ incorporates at least three meanings: swiftness, speed (*vitesse*), likened to violence — sudden force, abrupt edge . . . and to life (*vie*) itself: to be quick means to stay alive . . .” (p. 55).

For the Nuremberg trials, only those interpreters who were quick enough survived the encounter with the IBM system. “More than 200 people were tested before the trial to obtain the first 36 simultaneous interpreters” (Gaiba, 1998, p. 48). “We staged mock trials to judge whether candidates were able to respond instantly to the verbal stimuli without falling behind” (Ramler, 2008, p. 52). Turnover during the trial was calculated at 104% (Gaiba, 1998, p. 56). Steer explained this phenomenon further:

I acted as an interpreter on a few occasions, but I wasn’t very good at it. You need a certain amount of absolutely iron nervous control, so that you can absolutely rely on the fact that you’re never going to stutter or stop, ever. (Gaskin, 1990, p. 38)

A court clerk, Ron Chapman, observed the situation: “The interpreters couldn’t wait until the whole question had finished, and then translate [sic] it, because it would take so long, and it would lose its continuation” (Gaskin, p. 93). Uiberall, who eventually became Chief Interpreter (Gaiba, 1998), described the Russian interpreters in this way:

[They were] excellent – I never saw them flounder. And it is very difficult to translate into Russian, for the simple reason that the Russian is so much longer: there are more words, so you have to speak faster and get more in during the same period of time. (Gaskin, 1990, p. 70)

In fact, Steer explained, “if the lag got longer [than eight to ten seconds], the interpreter would soon get into trouble, because you can only hold a limited number of words in

your memory under those conditions” (Gaskin, 1990 p. 39). Steer added, “it tickled me no end that [defendant Albert] Speer was the first one to grasp that this idea [of simultaneous interpreting] was workable and was saving an enormous amount of time” (Gaskin p. 85). Ramler adds another perspective: “After the trials started, Herman Göring was overheard to say, ‘This system is very efficient, but it will also shorten my life!’” (2008, p. 50).

The repeated emphasis on saving time, not being able to wait, needing to speak faster so as to compress language into less time than its grammar requires, and otherwise not losing time, demonstrate that speed was determined to be the single most significant criteria driving the professional delivery of simultaneous interpretation. “I know for a fact that it was such a stressful thing for these translators [sic] that two or three of them had nervous breakdowns during the trial. It was really terrible, because they could not afford to get a word wrong,” says Chapman (as cited in Gaskin, 1990, p. 93). “We had no body of experience to draw on,” explains Ramler, “and had to develop the necessary skills on our own. These challenges were the impetus to create a system of simultaneous interpretation, now in general use throughout the world, but pioneered on a large scale by our group at Nuremberg” (2008, p. 50).

In addition to creating speed as the primary baseline metric for assessing the functionality of a simultaneous interpreter, the normal processes of communicative repair were denied to interpreters. All of the participants at Nuremberg, including judges, defendants, interpreters, administrators, witnesses, reporters and public observers, erected a social taboo to isolate the interpreter from the inherently interactive process of co-constructing meaning. This interaction taboo grew out of the imposed value of speed,

general dehumanization of the interpreter as a participant in the communication process, and the linguistic paradigm's emphasis on source language as the only relevant standard by which to measure accuracy.

6.1.5 Iron Nervous Control and the Interpersonal Reduction

Steer, quoted above describing his inability to perform to the specification of speed admits, "I couldn't attain that sort of assurance. . . . We found that the job of interpreting was so nerve-racking that the individual could not do this day after day" (as cited in Gaskin, 1990, p. 38). By assurance, Steer is probably referring to closure. Closure is the skill Ramler (U.S. Courts, 2010) names as "the ability to think of the second best word *instantly* [emphasis added], or the third best word." There is a fallacy implied in Ramler's description: the metaphor of number is an example of the myth of linguistic equivalence in that anyone or everyone would rank the first, second, and third "best words" similarly, despite interpreters' professional knowledge that "there is no such thing as an exact translation of any word" (Uiberall, as cited in Gaskin, 1990, p. 48).

Isolating the interpreter as a linguistic functionary making simple digital decisions ("this" word or "that" word) is a mechanism of control: the interpreter is forced to eliminate the relational. Cultural distinctions in terms of social interaction and the non-verbal are erased or suppressed in favour of the more palpable variables of language use at the levels of, say, morphology and syntax. This is evidenced by models for assessing the quality of interpretation, which always begin with an evaluation of the accuracy of diction (literally, 'exact translation at the level of word) or sense (more loosely, at the level of phrasal or aggregate meaning) from source to target text (see, for example, Figure 2 in Pöchhacker, 2001, p. 413). In Pöchhacker's diagram of the communication

process, the success of the communicative interaction is represented as following linearly from “an accurate rendition of source” (p. 413). The underlying assumption is that the faster an interpreter generates an “adequate target-l[anguage] expression” then an “equivalent intended effect” is (shown as) achieved (p. 413). In other words, the interpretation is deemed successful on the basis of linguistic criteria alone. Notably, the temporal direction of evaluation is backwards rather than forward in time: the “source” is taken as definitive, as if everyone always says only and exactly what they mean, all the time; or as if saying what one means, exactly and precisely, guarantees that one will be understood as one intends. These assumptions institute constraints within the communication transaction that inhibit voice.

In other words, the cost of misunderstanding (or even failure) at the cultural or social level is presumed to be lower (as in, not worth worrying about too much) than the gain of connected knowing (i.e., of co-creating a relationship across difference that is solidly based in mutual understanding, cf Belenky et al, 1997). The supposedly lower cost of damaged relationships is quantified in an absolute sense (i.e, source-determined accuracy), which may not correspond with anyone’s desired outcome. What has occurred is that only one area of work-related demand on the interpreter is acknowledged: what Dean and Pollard (2001) identified as the linguistic category.²⁰⁹ Completely disregarded are the three other sources of work demands: environmental, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. As the control for the system of SI in the EP, the simultaneous interpreter was *produced* to maintain the flow of communication transaction, but interpreters are

²⁰⁹ Robyn K. Dean & Robert Q. Pollard, Jr. 2001. “Application of Demand-Control Theory to Sign Language Interpreting: Implications for Stress and Interpreter Training.” *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 6(1), p. 5.

denied the use of controls to manage the various demands put upon them.²¹⁰ The specific items included in each category of demand sources for sign language interpreters will not coincide exactly with the demand sources for interpreters in the European Parliament, but they are an excellent reference point, particularly as the EP expands its *Ad Personam* community-style interpreting services.

Ignoring the full range of demands in the (now) institutionalized automatic pilot of the IBM system's interpersonal reduction inhibits interpreters and interpretees from cooperating with each other to generate and confirm shared understandings. How sign language community interpreters are beginning to work comfortably in role space with relational autonomy will be explained in the next section about interpreting and the American Deaf community. Relational autonomy (Witter-Merithew, Johnson & Nicodemus, 2010) is the ability (one could perhaps go so far as to say the authority) of interpreters to exercise decision latitude, accounting for all demands and including the dynamic flux of alignments with interpretees through exercising an enlightened role space. Witter-Merithew et al. explain: "effective autonomy is achieved when the social conditions that support it are in place and give the practitioner—and consumers—the confidence to take charge of choices" (p. 50).

Although these will not be detailed here, some of the disciplinary methods used to ensure interpreters' conformity to the need for speed and limits of interaction include ridicule (see Kent, 2009) and banishment or threat of banishment. For instance, the latter

²¹⁰ Ramler describes "a trance-like element in this process" of "total concentration, staying in tune with the flow of the speaker, and keeping him or her in sight, to achieve simultaneity" (2008, p. 52). The phenomenality of this experience of concentration is thwarted by different fluencies of ELF and other lingua francas used non-fluently.

is exemplified in textbooks and scholarly literature on international business, which routinely include negative anecdotes or other aspersions against the use of simultaneous interpreters (e.g. Luo & Shenkar, 2006; Veruyten, 2006).²¹¹ These social sanctions emerge from the simple engineering standard utilized at Nuremberg: failure. “We had repeated instances when an interpreter would simply fail, break down, be unable to continue, and we would have to put in a substitute at as short notice as possible, so that the court wouldn’t be delayed any more than need be” (Steer, as cited in Gaskin, 1990, p. 38).

Harry Fiss describes himself as a translator at Nuremberg, although he interpreted too, but not in the courtroom.²¹² Fiss was in charge of the prosecutions files. “By that I mean I would get a call by an attorney who needed Document So and So for cross-interrogating Göring. I would have to come up with it translated, analysed. All that work would be done by the whole translation division under me” (in Stave et al, 1998, p. 97). Fiss was also called upon to interrogate witnesses, including Rudolf Höss and Otto Ohlendorff).

²¹¹ Verluyten (2006) gives an account, *Mr Adams goes to China*, in which the interpreter “was never seen again” after “a misunderstanding” in which “the interpreter made a mistake” while interpreting the idiomatic English expression, “*you might as well get up and have a cup of coffee*” (p. 19). This is clearly misplaced blame. The source text is problematic, and it seems the audience must have been desperate for a break if so many of them left so quickly that they could “pour back into the room” upon being called back.

²¹² “I didn’t work inside the courtroom. I could only translate; I couldn’t do simultaneous interpretation...I failed the exam! I couldn’t do it! Not because my German wasn’t good enough. I just couldn’t do it. You have to have a special talent for that. It takes a lot out of you. These guys need a rest every two hours. It’s a very, very strenuous job.” (Fiss, in Stave, 1998, p. 102).

How I was able to do this, I'm wondering. It's amazing that I was able to not manage to feel anything all. I just did my work...the same numbing of feelings that helped the SS execute people also helped the survivors...I was able to talk to this SS man who had killed I don't know how many hundreds of thousands of people, smoking a cigarette and telling me with great pride how he made this killing machine more and more efficient. That was Ohlendorff. (p. 98)

Fiss also wrote "a kind of novel" that was never published about the interrogation of Höss (p. 98). Here is an excerpt:

Mr Booth was saying, "What's your name?" and I was acting as the interpreter. Höss answered in a controlled voice. "Your rank and arm of service." *Mechanically the questions and answers came in one language and were converted into another.* (emphasis added, p. 98)

Continuing, Fiss switches to first person, as if he is conducting the interrogation, not interpreting it.

I said to him, "You told us once that you'd be willing to sign this confession," and Höss stared at the document and said, "Yes, but there is something wrong," and then he pointed to the second line. "What's wrong?" Höss said to me, "Right here." He moved his finger across the page. "It says here that I personally arranged the gassing of three million persons between June 1941 and the end of 1943." "Well, isn't that what you said?" "I'm afraid not. I said that only two million were gassed. You have to get the record straight. The rest died of other causes." "Other causes?" "You know, the usual thing, malnutrition, dysentery, typhoid. We had an awful lot of typhoid cases." "I see." Mr. Booth leaned back and sighed. "Okay, change it then."

As the narrator of this account, Fiss puts us in the interpreter's position. In the absence of technology, when there is no glass between the interpreter and the interpretees, communication is personal. Recall the community interpreting situation when an interpreter (in a medical context), shifted from direct to indirect speech, "step[ping] into the situation in order to solve" a "disagreement" (Merlini & Favaron, 2009, p. 195-

196).²¹³ Perhaps this is why Fiss asserted that his job “was far more interesting” than the courtroom interpreting (in Stave, 1998, p. 102).

Both in the courtroom and without, interpreting the War Crimes Tribunal was traumatic. Fiss wrote about his experiences soon after they happened, at a time when “nobody wanted to hear anything about the Holocaust” (p. 100). He explains, “I think that a lot of people kept silent and tried to repress it and not think about it and not talk about it. They repressed everything, including anger” (p. 100). Even though Fiss did talk about it, felt anger and even “acted it out” (p. 100), there are still moments when his memory is blank. In the scene with Höss,

[Mr. Booth] pushed the fountain pen across the table. Höss picked up the pen, unscrewed the top *and without further ado crossed out the three million and put in two million over it*. Then he signed his name and then he blew on the paper until the ink was dry. I never could remember what happened afterwards. (p. 99)

The tactics of coping with trauma were fused with the performance of interpreting: the disembodied “mechanical” voice, silence, and repression were normalized as features of simultaneous interpretation because everyone involved in the trial had to find ways to cope with its horrors.

6.1.6 The Social Construction of Technology

In a landmark article about the social construction of the automobile, Kline and Pinch (1996) demonstrated conclusively how “users of technology acted as agents of

²¹³ This instance was previously described on p. 121 as an example of agency on the interpreter’s part. This example also illustrates cooperation from interpretees in seeking shared understanding rather than insisting on a literal rendition of ‘what I said!’ This example can be more accurately and deeply described in terms of the concepts of relational autonomy and role space that are introduced in Section 6.5.

technological change” (p. 764). Compare the automobile with the IBM system, and car drivers and passengers with interpreters and interpretees. Kline and Pinch showed how farm workers in the rural United States acted with “interpretive flexibility” by adapting the automobile to a wide range of practical uses that were *unintended* by the manufacturer. By interpretive flexibility, Kline and Pinch refer to the

new meanings . . . given to the car by the new emerging social group of users . . . To the urban user the car meant transport. For the rural users we have identified, the car, as well as being a form of transport, could be a farm tool, a stationary source of power, part of a domestic technology [such as a laundry machine], or perhaps all of these. (p. 777)

Kline and Pinch’s analysis shows a dynamic of competing interests among social groups who are brought into contact with each other by the technology.

While the automobile industry struggled for decades to establish closure on the social meaning and practical uses of the car (Kline & Pinch, 1996), the first interpreters and the first consumers of simultaneous interpretation accepted the component specifications for the simultaneous interpreter without apparent question or critique. This model was picked up by the first wave of interpreter trainers without doubt and is evidence of the *ideology* of speed. No one imagined other, additional or different ways of using simultaneous interpreting because there was social consensus that the interpreter *was supposed* to blend in as an invisible part of the machine.

6.1.7 Nuremberg’s Hidden Community Interpreting

Intriguingly, Siegfried Ramler describes working as a community interpreter (even though he does not use this label), prior to the start of the Nuremberg trial. He handled the logistics of housing for troops and officers. “Serving as interpreter, I would

give the house's occupants one hour to clear the premises, allowing them to take along only items they could carry...while it was unpleasant to evict people from their homes, I approached this task as politely as possible" (2008, pp. 36-40). Further, Ramler (and certainly others) were involved with interpreting the interrogations that occurred prior to the Trial's start.

Immediately after my arrival in Nuremberg, I was assigned to interrogations, starting early in the morning and often lasting late into the evening. These were designed to build the prosecution's case and validate documentary evidence. The interrogations involved defendants and witnesses called to clarify and explain a given segment of the prosecution's case...Guards brought the defendants up from their prison cells to one of the interrogation rooms in the Palace of Justice. Present in the room would be a prosecution lawyer, a court reporter, and the German-English interpreter, which was my function during the pretrial phase...When I think back to my most memorable experiences during the four years I spent in Nuremberg—over a year with the international trial and three additional years with the subsequent proceedings—the interrogations in preparation for the major trial *stand out*, as Germany's erstwhile leaders presented spontaneous and unfiltered testimony. This was the first time, just weeks after their capture...that these men were required to answer questions and comment on their roles during the [Nazi] regime. The interrogations often paralleled an autopsy, where doctors trace the development of a disease leading to the patient's death. Their testimony yielded 'history in the raw,' expressed spontaneously before formal testimony on the witness stand could be shaped and filtered by defense strategy. (emphasis added, 2008, pp. 47).

A photograph shows Ramler at work, approximately two feet away from a defendant.

The caption reads: "Charged with kidnapping, enslavement, extermination, and crimes against humanity, former Obergruppenführer and SS General Warner Lorenz is questioned by interpreter Siegfried Ramler during the pre-trial phase of the Nuremberg proceedings" (p. 46). Ramler explains, "During the pretrial phase the language interpretation required me to translate [sic] the Counsel's questions into German, and the defendant's or witness's responses into English. Some of the accused, such as Göring and Ribbentrop, understood English but preferred to wait for the translation and respond in German, giving them time to think" (p. 48).

These situations are examples of community interpreting. What stands out is the intimacy of close proximity, the “spontaneous and unfiltered” and “raw” reality of interpreted interaction. In the case of ousting people from their homes, this is an old story of interpreters aligned with power. Chinua Achebe describes it in his (1958) classic *Things Fall Apart*:

When they had all gathered, the white man began to speak to them. He spoke through an interpreter who was an Ibo man, though his dialect was different and harsh to the ears of Mbanta. Many people laughed at his dialect and the way he used words strangely. Instead of saying “myself” he always said “my buttocks”. But he was a man of commanding presence and the clansmen listened to him. He said he was one of them, as they could see from his colour and his language...the white man was also their brother because they were all sons of God. And he told them about this new God, the Creator of the world... (p. 102).

Achebe also depicts breakdowns in the interpreted communication, a combination of role confusion (or abuse) by the interpreters and the failure of participants to monitor turn-taking and make sure everyone is equally understood by each other.

Ramler’s other example involves a small group situation which, given the topic, is unavoidably intimate.²¹⁴ These are the situations that community interpreters work within daily. Power and interpersonal dynamics, combined with challenges of mutual understanding, are palpable, sometimes even visceral. There is no distance provided by technology. This is the fundamental difference between simultaneous interpretation performed in the conference mode at the European Parliament and the community mode in the neighborhoods, towns and cities where people live in proximity with those who do and do not share a common language.

²¹⁴ Interesting that Ramler notes the agency of interpretees, too, in their strategic use of simultaneous interpretation as an intercultural communication tool.

It may be an overstatement to describe the emphasis on the IBM system of conference interpreting over the face-to-face encounters of community interpreting as collective amnesia. Nonetheless, the discursive evidence (in history and contemporarily) illustrates clearly how one mode became popular while the other was ignored. Was this a conscious oversight? A deliberate over-valuing of one mode over the other? Most likely not; instead the disparity of emphasis is an example of an ideology (speed) and its hegemonic values. In particular, the desire for control associated with the perceived objectivity of machine technology rather than the messy immediacy of human emotion intertwined with inevitable flaws of subjectivity. The absence of attention to community interpreting before, during, and after Nuremberg is perhaps due to the phenomenon of discursive repression.

The lopsided value placed on conference interpreting over and against community interpreting suggests the mechanism of repression. Technological utopianism may have presented conference interpreting as a panacea for the ills of community interpreting: a legacy of being on the wrong side of history that practitioners may prefer to forget. This could be one of the sources for the interaction taboo (see section 6.2.7), which prohibits participants in SI from engaging with the interpreters ‘directly,’ encouraging everyone to act *as if* the interpreters are not co-participants in the communication.²¹⁵

²¹⁵ A question this dissertation does not explore is who decided that interpreted communication should be judged and evaluated according to how closely it mimics same-language communication? This collective pretence perpetuates the interaction taboo by reducing the interpreter to a non-human status. The interpersonal reduction of the interpreter to a machine (see section 6.2.8) prohibits shared responsibility for meaning by discouraging proactive engagement with co-creating mutual understanding.

6.1.8 The Interaction Taboo

The conditions of the Nuremberg Tribunal combined with the IBM system created a perfect petri dish for the ideology of speed: insert bilingual or multilingual human being with iron nervous control and out spurts the professional simultaneous interpreter. No one seriously questioned the machine model until it reached beyond the conference and into the community. The history of the social construction of technology illustrates how unusual it is for a new technology *not* to be adapted by its intended consumers. Nonetheless, the system of SI as it was created at Nuremberg has now grown into the current version of controlled multilingualism represented above in the discourse about SI in the EP.

Creative adaptation of the technology as a tool for pluralilingualism has not been exercised. Instead, the “simple Derridean point” (Chang, personal correspondence, October 15, 2011) about the essential communicative equality of misunderstanding and understanding has been suppressed by a discourse that privileges the easy speed of presumed mutual comprehension. Unchallenged, the primacy of the conference-style model, exemplified by the regime of controlled multilingualism (i.e., the system of SI in the EP), results in the common sense that “the time delay is unsurmountable” (NM28). Eventually, the model of simultaneous interpretation was exported out of the legalistic conference setting and into the community, effecting the daily lives of people in need of communication accommodations in order to negotiate with the institutions relevant to the quality of their every day lives.

The Deaf community in the United States was open to and excited by the expansion of communication access but unprepared for having their cultural center disregarded. The tension built to outrage at the imposition of external control on a cultural system of interpreting that had already developed indigenously and continues to

prove successful at integrating Deaf people as members of a distinct linguistic minority into the larger texture of American life. Although it required decades to develop the discursive conscious to articulate the practical consciousness of interpreters with “Deaf heart” (e.g., Colonomos, 2013), it is now crystal clear that Deaf resistance to what they identified as a machine model of interpreting is has much to do with the insistence on speed and language without regard for the give-and-take often required for genuine comprehension. Conference interpreting privileges the speed of information transfer and calls it quality by a measure (usually called accuracy) that assumes a simplistic transparency of meaning and disregards how these enactments shape social transactions.

Deaf people, familiar with their own cultural model of community-based interpreting, understood intuitively that they were being asked to sacrifice cultural values and identity in order to be granted access into mainstream culture. They were to give up the imperative of ensuring understanding in favour of speed, and thereby surrender the integrity of their relationships with each other and outsiders for a fake sense of inclusion. In other words, Deaf people called the bluff on the ideology of speed and its lopsided communication emphasis on the transmission of information in space. During the height of Deaf activism in the 1990s, ‘Stop separating your head from your heart,’ was a common accusation against sign language interpreters schooled in the ways of conference interpreting. If the European Parliament seeks to seriously protect the linguistic heritage and diversity of its citizens’ national languages, then Members of the European Parliament must embrace their pluralinguistic contributions and model co-constructing a common European identity. Lessons from community interpreting about pluralingualism may be of at least equal value to all of the multilingual policies which, in practice, support serial homolingualism.

Table 18. Timeline of Developments in Community and Conference Interpreting

Community SI (e.g., Signed Languages)	Date	Conference SI (mainly Spoken Languages)
	1925-1926	Invention of the Filene-Finlay system, manufactured by IBM
	1941	1st simultaneous interpreter training program: la Faculté de traduction et d'interprétation (ETI) at the Université de Genève
	1945	United Nations Charter drawn up in five official languages, Arabic added in 1973.
	1945-1946	Nuremburg War Crimes Tribunal using the "IBM translation system"
	1948	A Mathematical Theory of Communication by Claude Shannon (American)
	1952	Earliest version of the European Parliament, the "Common Assembly" of the European Coal and Steel Community
	1957	Treaties of Rome lead to the "European Parliamentary Assembly" of the European Economic Community
	1957	ISIT Paris Institute of Intercultural Management and Communication
	1958	ESIT Paris School of Interpreting and Translation at Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle
	1958	European Economic Council: Regulation No. 1 determining the languages to be used by the European Economic Community institutes language rights for national languages in (what becomes) the European Union
1st linguistic argument for ASL published by William Stokoe (American)	1960	
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) founded (US)	1964	
	1965	Merger/Brussels Treaty consolidates EU Institutions
RID incorporates (US)	1972	
	1973	European Parliament's language regime expands to six
Audism: concept coined and defined by Tom Humphries (American)	1975	
Conference of Interpreter Trainers established (US)	1978	Interpreting for International Conferences: Problems of Language and Communication by Danica Seleskovitch (Serbian-French)

Community SI (e.g., Signed Languages)	Date	Conference SI (mainly Spoken Languages)
1st cognitive research of ASL, “The signs of language”, published by Edward S Klima and Ursula Bellugi (American)	1979	
Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada founded	1980	
	1981	European Parliament’s language regime expands to seven
National Registers of Communication Professionals Working with Deaf and DeafBlind People (UK) founded	1982	
RID rejects ASL as an official organizational language	1984	
1st public criticism of the “machine model” of interpreting, RID national convention	1985	
	1986	European Parliament’s language regime expands to nine
European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters founded	1987	
<i>Deaf President Now!</i> protest at Gallaudet University (US)	1988	
Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association founded	1991	
	1992	All six languages of the United Nations are recognized as both official and working languages.
Slovak Republic and Finland recognize Sign Language in law	1993	
Czech Sign Language recognized by law	1995	European Parliament’s language regime expands to eleven
	1996	Alex Ndeezi First Deaf Signer elected as a Member to the Ugandan Parliament
Oralism: defined by Paddy Ladd (British)	1998	European Parliament passes a resolution for all Member States to recognize their national sign languages
World Association of Sign Language Interpreters founded	2003	
	2004	European Parliament’s language regime expands to twenty
	2007	European Parliament’s language regime expands to twenty-three
	2009	Ádám Kósa, Deaf Signer from Hungary elected to the European Parliament

Community SI (e.g., Signed Languages)	Date	Conference SI (mainly Spoken Languages)
Insign pilot project (http://www.eu-insign.eu/) for Deaf citizens to communicate through a web-based platform with the European institutions	2014	

6.2 Deaf Resistance and Intercultural Critique

Taking the US American case, a disconnect in perceptions between the culturally Deaf viewpoint and the general perspective of professional sign language interpreters has inspired over forty years of debate regarding what makes a good simultaneous interpreter. Lou Fant (1990) describes the founding of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) as an “unexpected outcome” (p. 6) of a federally-funded *Workshop on Interpreting for the Deaf* at Ball State University which “surely would have come about shortly afterwards” if it had not happened then and there (p. 6). According to minutes published in Fant’s retrospective, sixty-six people launched the professionalization of sign language interpreting; one third of these founders were Deaf. Seven of the Deaf sustaining members also self-identified as interpreters (p. 5). Due to adequate federal funding for training, unprecedented rapid growth ensued.

Within a few years, however, there was a backlash from the Deaf community which, in important respects, continues to the present day. “Deaf individuals are being asked to give their trust to someone they have not met before, who has no prior or even current connection to their community, and who might not understand their values and culture” (McDermid, 2009). The distinction between “conference” and “community” interpreters is often brought sharply into focus on this point: elites will not suffer interpreters with inadequate linguistic fluency or cross-cultural knowledge while the Deaf, as a linguistic minority, seem to lack the institutional leverage to guarantee

uniformly high quality standards. This has not stopped the Deaf community from insisting on improvements. Indeed, a diagnosis of oppression emerged as both logical explanation and empowered resistance after 1983 when RID, by then the national certifying organization for professional sign language interpreters in the US, failed to recognize American Sign Language as an official language of the organization (MJ Bienvenu, 2009).

6.2.1 A Black Swan

Thinking in terms of time allows one to recognize that the disruptive effect of the IBM System's model of SI on the cultures of Deaf people is an example of a "black swan," that is, an historical event with deep consequentiality that was not predicted and which has not previously been adequately explained (Taleb, 2005). Charlotte Baker-Shenk published the first treatise against "the machine model" of interpreting (1986). Writing on behalf of an unnamed group of colleagues (presumably including Deaf individuals), Baker-Shenk explained how the basic interpreting or machine model of the sign language interpreter's role assumed two "equals" who use the interpreter "machine" because they do not share a common language (p. 52).

Baker-Shenk elaborated that although the interpreter may make some "cultural adjustments" to accurately convey the messages of each party, still both parties are on their own: every individual must take solo responsibility for their interaction (p. xx). Five years later, after the Deaf community had adopted and extended the definition of the machine model, Baker-Shenk (1991) clarifies that her original use of

the term 'machine' model ... was to describe the interpreter's role ...functioning ...ethically...as machines. This machine model clearly reveals the basic tendencies of people in power (the dominant class) both

to deny the reality of their power and to deny that power is part of what's going on in **every** situation. (pp. 123-124)

Persistent, critical pressure from Deaf interpretees required practitioners, interpreting trainers, and sign language interpreting researchers to take notice and eventually respond.

The Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT), established in 1979, became a venue for improvement. By 1999, Anna Mindess reported that spoken language interpreting professors at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (California) told her “that they consider sign language interpreters very advanced in our discussions about the cultural aspects of interpreting and in the idea of interpreters as bicultural mediators” (p. 161). CIT has continued to steadily increase its reputation. In the main, however, the advances of signed language community interpreters have not been much noticed by spoken language conference interpreters.

6.2.1.1 Deaf Voice

Widening the context to its full historical import, the resistance of conference-style trained simultaneous sign language interpreters in adapting to the Deaf community-style model is parallel in contemporary timestream with the resistance of MEP interpretees to plurilingualistic social transaction. The dynamics of controlled multilingualism in the EP promote competition among exclusive homolingualisms. The discursive emphasis on fast information transfer unilaterally promotes and reinforces the transmission or machine model of interpreting: a translation machine. A counterdiscourse of plurilingualism is a corrective to the unintended but devastating consequences of valuing the ease of speed over the quality of shared comprehension. Deaf people, with

their unique linguistic and cultural differences, reintroduce the relational by valuing the time required to ensure mutual understanding.

6.2.2 The Deaf Case: Practical to Discursive Consciousness

Deaf people knew perfectly well how to work with interpreters long before the birth of the sign language interpreting profession in Evansville, Indiana in 1964, but they had never had to explain it to anyone before. “There have always been information sharers, and their responsibility within the Deaf community is to ensure that community members understand the information” (Stone, 2009, p. 19). The roots of community interpreting were premised in an “original cultural system that [had] been unconsciously derived and unconsciously manifested” (Sherwood, 1983, p. 14). It was almost four decades before sign language interpreter-researcher Dennis Cokely (2005) distinguished between “evolved” and “schooled” interpreters as part of an effort to explain the intergroup conflict that was created by the unexpectedly rapid growth of the sign language interpreting profession.

Evolved interpreters are indigenous. They grow up within the community interpreting for family and friends as necessary and have, therefore, internalized the norms of social behavior in practical ways, just like every other member or close friend of the community. Historically, as Sherwood points out, evolved interpreters had practical consciousness in the sense meant by Giddens. They simply knew what to do in order to make intercultural communication with hearing (non-deaf/non-signing) people work, and they did it. A somewhat similar phenomenon is described by old-school interpreters for the European Parliament, who recount how they simply ‘fell into’ interpreting because they grew up in multilingual families and were good at it, compared

with the new-school interpreters who learn languages formally because they have consciously determined to pursue interpreting as a career.

In the US, when schooled sign language interpreters began entering the field in large numbers, they added to the force of a new way of interpreting already imposed on the Deaf community by an influx of outsiders. These new ways were strange and painful, experienced by Deaf persons as alienating and oppressive (e.g., Baker-Shenk, 1986; Fant, 1990; Moore & Levitan, 2003). Over the years, through advocacy and resistance, Deaf people built up a vocabulary for describing the machine model and as well as preferred practices and features of “interpreting culturally rich realities” (Cokely, 2001; Mindess, 1999). Recently, sign language interpreting researchers have

- re-discovered Deaf norms for interpreting (Adam, Carty & Stone, 2011; Forestal, 2011; Stone, 2009),
- created a multidimensional model of the interpreter’s role space (Lee & Llewellyn-Jones, 2011),
- developed the concepts of relational autonomy and decision latitude (Witter-Merithew, Johnson & Nicodemus, 2011) and
- adapted a “demand-control schema” (Dean and Pollard 2001, 2011) that is being widely adopted as the premier model for professional development and ethical performance in community interpreting.

The scaffold for professional practice is now substantial, but its constructs had to be forged in opposition to the machine model within a context of intense backlash.

The next few sections trace a cultural-level development from practical to discursive consciousness that the American Deaf Community had to pursue in order to resist the imposition of those antagonistic standards of interpreting that infiltrated Deaf cultural timespace during the process of professionalizing signed language interpretation.

6.2.3 Caught up in the Machine

The implications of professionalization, specifically of “investing professional authority” (Brunson, 2006) in interpreters were not predicted (Fant, 1990) by the tight community that launched and led the organizing process in the 1960s. Related to, yet different than, the systems of spoken language interpreting at international venues such as United Nations and the young institutions of the European Union that sprang from the Nuremberg precedent, community interpreting involved visual-gestural American Sign Language and spoken (sound-based) English. The spread of the conference interpreting model to community interpreting is an example of a phenomenon known in organizational management as isomorphism, in which rational procedures (such as trainings) that are established and practiced in an institutional context generate a tendency to sameness across a given field of activity (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Isomorphism literally means taking the same shape. Schooled sign language interpreters ‘took the same shape’ as spoken language conference interpreters because the field of activity was presumed to be the same and the rational procedures (instantaneous decision-making because you cannot afford to stop, etc.) were unquestioned.

With uncanny insight, Deaf people pinpointed the machine-like nature of the inherited conference interpreting model. “The ‘machine’ or ‘conduit’ model...greatly limited [interpreters’] responsibility for either party’s understanding of the other’s message. Like a typewriter or telephone answering machine, we [interpreters] were only to transmit what we had received without altering its contents in any way” (Mindess, 1999).

“The focus of this [machine or conduit] metaphor is on interpreting the language of the participants, with the assumption that the primary

difference between Deaf people and hearing people can be explained by differences in language and modality (signed vs. spoken language). The assumption is that the responsibility of the interpreter is to convey each person's words, which would otherwise be inaccessible due to the modality difference. (Emphasis in original Hoza, 1999: 44)

Without historical context, and never having had a reason to defend the evolved community interpreting model, the amazing communication accommodation of simultaneous interpretation was suddenly experienced as contributing more to the oppression of Deaf people than alleviating it.

6.2.4 “I was a Robot”

In *For Hearing People Only*, Moore & Levitan report one of too many such instances when interpreters' authority to assess and act upon practical interaction dynamics was suppressed by the pervasive “machine” logic. “We’ve read Lou Ann Walker’s harrowing account of ... [being] terribly constrained by the code of ethics” in such a way that “a young, poor black woman who had killed her sister’s vicious boyfriend in self-defense... [who] should have been acquitted ... was found guilty and sentenced to prison. Walker, who sympathized with the woman, was helpless to aid her in court: ‘I was a robot.’” (1999/2003: 522).²¹⁶ Paul Preston, interviewing 150 hearing (not deaf) children of Deaf parents explains their disagreement with the model perpetuated by the professionalization of interpreting:

²¹⁶ Angelelli (2001) describes this behaviour in machine model terms: “The invisible interpreter follows the traffic flow instead of controlling it, ignores differences in register, and is indifferent to the parties’ access or lack of access to the message. The invisible interpreter is not active in the cross-cultural brokerage but rather, treats the message at the linguistic level only” (p. 134).

A more mechanistic approach is thought to provide deaf people with unfiltered interactions with the Hearing world; any attempt at clarification merely sustains the barriers between the Deaf and Hearing. Most informants who were professional [evolved] interpreters, however, cited their family experiences as favoring a less rigid and mechanistic approach to interpreting. (1994, p. 145)

Baker-Shenk acknowledges how her label, machine model, which she originally intended to be specific to ethical decision-making, had been taken up and used to describe another dimension of the enactment of simultaneous interpretation.

Let me clarify my use of the term “machine” model. I first used this term at the 1985 RID Convention...since then, it has been used in a different way, specifically referring to the linguistic process of word-for-sign or sign-for-word, machine-like transliteration. (1991, p. 123)

A representation of “rigid mechanical Sign” by an interpreter is provided in a work of fiction by T.C. Boyle (2006/2007, p. 57). Identity theft has placed a young deaf woman in police custody; she does not know why. When the interpreter arrives she explains:

There's some huge mistake. All I did was run a four-way stop ... and they, they ... Iverson took his time. His signing was rigid and inelegant but comprehensible...He held her eyes. His mouth was drawn tight, no sympathy there. It came to her that he believed the charges, believed she'd led a double life, that she'd violated every decent standard and let the deaf community down, one more hearing prejudice confirmed. Yes, his eyes said, the deaf live by their own rules, inferior rules, compromised rules, they live off of us and on us. It was a look she'd seen all her life...

It's crazy. It's wrong, a mistake, that's all. Tell them it's a mistake.

The coldest look, the smallest Sign. *You get one phone call.* (p. 8, 12)

Boyle's realistic example merges both the ethical and linguistic dimensions of mechanical interpreting. Cynthia Roy elaborates:

Interpreters often describe their role “as the person in the middle” by using a metaphor which conveys the image or impression that they serve as a bridge or channel through which communication happens. This

channel is supposed to relay a message from one speaker to another faithfully, accurately, and without personal or emotional bias. The performance of this role has been compared to a machine, a window, a bridge, and a telephone line — among others — when trying to compress the complexity of the role into a simple, singular analogy or metaphor. (2000, p. 101)

Roy's distinction between a metaphor and a model is important; it is crucial to recognize what the metaphor teaches and reveals about the model. Criticism by Deaf people about the imposition of this alien model of interpretation focused on the interpreter because it was through the interpreter's adherence to the model that Deaf people experienced the destruction of cultural ways of relating to and interacting with others.

6.2.5 The Schooled Sign Language Interpreter²¹⁷

Campbell McDermid (2009) published a study on the social construction of sign language interpreters in Canada that illustrates the current state of tension between Deaf people as members of a linguistic minority group and sign language interpreters as professionals in the business of delivering a communication service that is intended to leverage social justice. "At one time," McDermid writes, "a successful interpreter was compared to an inanimate translation machine (Frishberg, 1986; Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001; Page, 1993), a metaphor that 'ignore[d] the essential fact that the interpreter [is] a human being' (Frishberg, 1986)" (2009, p. 108). McDermid, like many writing in the field now, casts the machine model as an artifact from history, a framing which implies it

²¹⁷ Caveat: The differences and similarities between evolved and schooled interpreters are not absolute. The analysis presented here is based on historical, aggregate trends and generalized characteristics: exceptions exist. Evolved interpreters are not automatically better than schooled interpreters; everyone should be trained (and trainable).

is no longer influential. However, evidence of machine model outcomes are persistent (Campbell, 2009). These adverse outcomes were predicted by Fenton (1993, in McDermid 2009: 106) based on similar trends between evolved and schooled interpreters unfolding in New Zealand. McDermid describes machine model outcomes in contemporary Canada (2009).

Going back through recent decades, McDermid finds documentation of a trend that “...deaf Canadians [are] ...distressed by the condescending views of some practitioners (Cripps, 1994; Cundy, 1989; Straitiy, 2002)” (in McDermid, 2009), and are concerned that schooled interpreters demonstrate “...inability to interpret successfully . . . especially from ASL to spoken English (Cripps, 1994; Cundy, 1989)” in (McDermid, 2009). In other words, schooled interpreters are often better with source messages from a dominant spoken language group ‘down’ a language hierarchy than they are with source messages ‘up’ the language hierarchy. In light of these concerns and dynamics, it is no surprise that McDermid cites another study finding that 14 of 15 interviewed deaf parents expressed positive views regarding the use of their hearing offspring (Mallory et al, 1992; McDermid, 2009) as evolved interpreters.

In sum, McDermid (2009) describes the education and training of American Sign Language/English interpreters in Canada²¹⁸ as a process of social construction that has shifted the performance of interpreting from its original locally-produced and homegrown roots to a style shaped exclusively by the experiences of being trained in school.

²¹⁸ Families of sign languages do not necessarily follow spoken language families. For instance, American Sign Language is linguistically related to LSF, *langue des signes francaïis* (French Sign Language) and spoken French, not to British Sign Language (BSL) or spoken English.

McDermid adopts Cokely's label of "evolved" (2005) to describe the original interpreters who had a deaf relative and/or worked at a residential school for the Deaf (Carbin, 1996; Cokely, 2003; Deninger, 1987; Napier, 2006; Van Herreweghe & Van Nuffel, 2000) and "were invited to interpret by the [Deaf] community" (2009, 105; Cokely, 2003; Evans & Bomak, 1996; Fenton, 1993; Van Herreweghe & Van Nuffel, 2000). In the literature, these evolved interpreters are set in sharp contrast with "schooled" interpreters (Cokely, 2005), whose faults and weaknesses are extensively documented and continue to vex the Deaf Community (e.g., Elliott, 2013).

6.2.6 Challenging the Machine²¹⁹

The Deaf invention of community interpreting is not emphasized in the academic literature on simultaneous interpretation. Members of American Deaf Culture understand the creation of the first professional organization for signed language interpreters as an "offshoot of the Deaf civil-rights movement" (Moore & Levitan, 2003). This Deaf claim to ownership of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and thus to signed language interpreting informs education, training, and professional development discourses within the field, but is rarely explicitly stated in the professional literature. One way to regain the evolved interpreting model is to demonstrate that this is the model that has been in open competition with the machine model for the last several decades.

²¹⁹ The author (a certified interpreter with no Deaf family) writes as an outsider, hoping that insiders will follow and fill in the many holes. In particular, records and stories from the NAD and other Deaf-centered and Deaf-led organizations who were engaged in the struggle over certification can probably only be gained by core members of the Deaf community with direct ties to these individuals.

The Deaf version of evolved community interpreters has been being expressed through the practices of evolved interpreters for several decades, and sign language interpreters have changed the model of interpreting directly because of Deaf criticism. It is interesting that spoken language community interpreters do not appear to be under similar pressure from their linguistic minority constituencies as signed language interpreters have been from the Deaf communities whom we serve. This may be because spoken language minority groups are encountering their own versions of moving practical consciousness to discursive consciousness in order to defend and uphold their own versions of evolved interpreters. The only comparable parallel I have found in the literature to date is with Aboriginal interpreters in Australia (Cooke, 2009).²²⁰ The crux of the criticism directed at signed language interpreters always involves culture. Specifically, the oppressive effect of the adopted professional model of conference-style simultaneous interpretation is that it promotes the Nuremberg/IBM system, forcing minority language participants to give up significant aspects of their cultural ways of being.

Deaf resistance to standard simultaneous interpretation illustrates the importance of both the *ritual* and the *transmission* aspects of communication. James Carey (1992) explains how these two aspects are represented as models of communication (the “transmission” model and the “ritual” model). He explains the historical existence of these models, side-by-side (although in different power ratios), in American society and elsewhere. What the history of simultaneous interpreting shows is a colonization of time

²²⁰ Cooke (2009) describes how interpreters for Aboriginal communities in Australia also place strong cultural expectations on interpreters that are counter to the model of the dominant society.

by the ideology of speed. This is accomplished by insisting on the linguistic fallacy (all words in all languages have equivalents), accompanied by the myth of accuracy (as if interpreters can singlehandedly determine meanings once and for all), and insisting on communication being accomplished as fast and automatically as possible. The inevitable result of interpreting speed and automaticity is homolingualism.

The core of Deaf feedback is that there are cultural problems with the prescriptions of the Nuremberg/IBM transmission model of simultaneous interpretation. Specifically, Deaf people's criticism of the machine model draws attention to the narrow emphasis on the transmission of information in the IBM system; which is what is playing out in the system of SI in the EP. This transmission model ignores the ritual aspects of communication, resulting in disregard for the relationships and identities of the interpretees. This social neglect applies to *all* of the participants and includes the interpreter(s), too. Deaf Americans (in particular) and others have been making the case that there is always more to communication than information alone. Revising the community interpreting model means insisting that ritual elements of social interaction are as important as the information content has radical implications because it brings us face to face with the interaction taboo.

6.2.7 Confronting the Interaction Taboo

The interaction taboo takes many forms, but it always involves not speaking about an issue of cultural difference, and probably always involves a power imbalance due to social status. Specifically, the interaction taboo supports a ban on interpreters facilitating the social aspects of an interpreted interaction in order to assist interpretees with comprehending each other. Dean and Pollard critique this as a problem of ethics (see

Figure 1), arguing that the profession uses a deontological, rules-based approach that ignores interpreter responsibility for the outcomes of interaction. Instead, they argue for a teleological ethics (which can also be “too liberal”) that is responsive to “the complex situation dynamics in which the individual is continually evaluating potential and actual decisions with respect to the outcomes of these decisions may, or are, causing” (2011, p. 157).

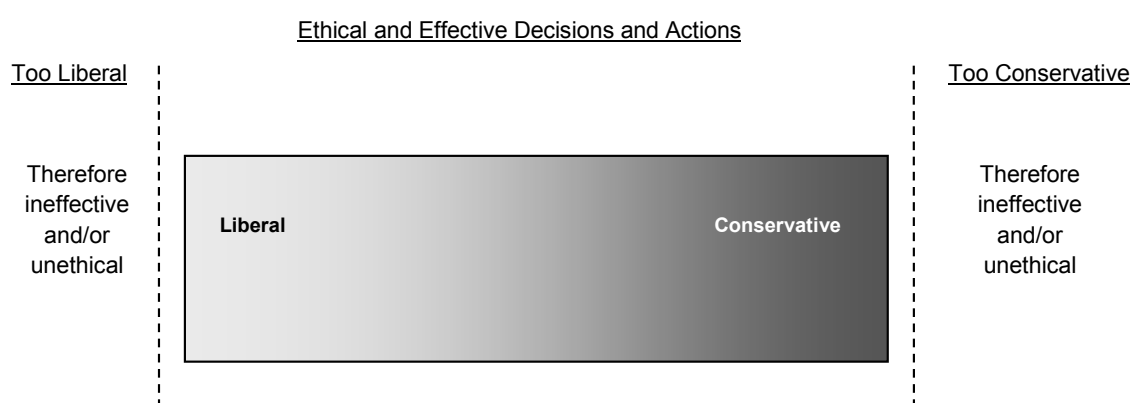


Figure 1. Ethical Decision Making in a Practice Profession

Source: Dean & Pollard, 2005. Consumers and service effectiveness in interpreting work: A practice profession perspective. The above figure, labelled “Figure 11.1,” appeared on page 270 of Interpreting and interpreter education: Directions for research and practice published by Oxford University Press. Used with permission.

In the deontological ethical framework (“too conservative”), interpreters “adherence to preordained rules” (Dean & Pollard, 2011, p. 157) leaves interpretees to fend for themselves.

Although some interpretees recognize and are able to act on their meta-awareness about the unusual situation of interpreted intercultural transaction, generally a deontological ethical approach leads to continued repetition of unsatisfactory intercultural dynamics. A blatant example comes from McDermid, whose study of American Sign Language (ASL) and Interpreter Training Program [ITP] programs found that

“Instructors were...advised to avoid criticizing the students for their inappropriate behavior or attitudes, as this was probably due to the values of today’s society” (2009, p. 121). Issues of intercultural difference and different social status are complicated and require sensitivity to facilitate. It turns out that schooled interpreters with no previous exposure or familiarity with Deaf ways typically have only practical consciousness (not discursive consciousness) of proper social behavior, and this practical consciousness is only evident within their own personal/cultural contexts (e.g., Cokely, 2005; McDermid, 2009; Preston, 1994). “Younger students in particular, took for granted their cultural identity, lacked any self-awareness around who they were and just dismissed issues of culture and power” (McDermid, 2009). Such limits on practical and discursive consciousness appear vividly apparent in the intercultural, pluralinguistic transaction-contexts of simultaneous interpretation.

Equipping interpreters and interpretees with discursive consciousness specific to both intercultural communication and ethical decision-making regarding the socially just mediation of unequal relationships will go a long way toward addressing the anxiety observed in students “when they were asked to participate in Deaf community events” (McDermid, 2009). The interaction taboo prevents conversation between teachers who are concerned with a perceived values conflict between ITP and Deaf Studies Programs’ non-deaf students and the Deaf community (McDermid, 2009).

The interaction taboo also supports a subtle conflation in which values of individualism are combined with a pathological judgment about Deaf persons and the Deaf community. For instance, McDermid includes these two labels together as if they always co-occur: “...Some students begin their programs with an individualistic,

pathological view of the Deaf community, as suggested by the research (Humphrey & Alcorn, 2001; Mindess, 1996). These learners believe there is no difference between hearing and Deaf cultures (Peterson, 1999)” (McDermid , 2009: 126).

While it may be the case that the distinct attitudes of cultural imperialism and audism generally co-occur, it is stereotyping to assume that they do. Allowing that students may only embody one or the other of these problematic attitudes enables important wiggle room for growth through the uncomfortable process of realizing one’s own complicity in the dehumanization of other human beings. Likewise, enabling conversation about the intersection of various identities (Holvino, 2010) in any given student and how these can play into interpreted interaction will open space for instruction about religious motivations in interpreting (McDermid, 2009), analysis and diagnosis of why interpreting attracts mainly white and middle class students (McDermid, 2009: 116), and perhaps crack the field’s gender bias (McDermid, 2009) and attract more men. While McDermid’s study results may seem disheartening in the sense that they demonstrate weaknesses in the current curriculum for schooling interpreters, what he has achieved is a snapshot that can serve as a benchmark against which to measure future improvements. Encouragingly, he also reports that the instructors who participated in his study “recognized their duty to prepare future citizens of the Deaf community” (McDermid, 2009) and are doing their best to undo the interaction taboo.

6.2.8 Exposing the Interpersonal Reduction

Given historical context, it hopefully becomes more clear why the social justice critique of oppression in interpreting practice is often aimed at the interpreter. The empowerment argument, however, cannot afford to stop with a reconfiguration of the

interpreter's role. In the absence of discursive consciousness about plurilingualism, the cultural aspects of evolved interpreting, combined with the historical timestream of the social construction of technology, cannot undo the interaction taboo. Casting all the responsibility for effective intercultural communication on the interpreter alone is an interpersonal reduction that dehumanizes the interpreter and the interpretees.

If interpreting is understood to involve relationships as much as information, then reducing the complicated whole of interpreted intercultural interaction to a single interpersonal dynamic between the interpreter and the Deaf consumer is a fallacy of selective observation. Surely there are sometimes issues at this level, but just because the interpreter is the obvious crux of the interpreted communication, it does not follow that whatever goes wrong must be the interpreter's fault! The interpersonal reduction needs to be recognized as a residue of the machine model that perpetuates the transmission model bias of privileging information over relationship.

Overcoming the interpersonal reduction and interaction taboo can shift entrenched dynamics of suspicion that Deaf consumers have about, for instance, being “[mislead]...into thinking that [interpreters] are more qualified than they are (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1998b, para. 1) (McDermid, 2009). Interpreters “lack of awareness of how issues of power and oppression shape their work (Baker-Shenk, 1986; Taylor & Straity, 1992)” (McDermid 2009) is, ironically, supported in some ways by interpretees' preferences for flow (Kent, 2012). Widening the scope of criticism of the machine model to include the interpretees' participation in rapid turn-taking, rushing through the delivery of information without allowing processes of confirmation for mutual understanding, de-valuing the significance of cultural

differences, and other features of the transmission model of interpretation over and above the establishment and performance of culturally-respectful relationships, will enable interpreters to act as “agents of change” (McDermid, 2009; Witter-Merithew, 1995), building productively upon the discourse foundation of basic generalizations that reinforce the fact of different cultural norms, such as those for reciprocity (McDermid, 2009; Smith, 1983; Still, 1990).

6.2.9 Reconstructing the Model

In 1979, Jemina Napier explains how the Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT) was established and “set the benchmark” of professional community interpreting for other countries (2010, p. 357). CIT was established six years before Baker-Shenk publicized Deaf criticism of the machine model of interpreting. By 1999, Anna Mindess reported that spoken language interpreting professors at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (California) told her “that they consider sign language interpreters very advanced in our discussions about the cultural aspects of interpreting and in the idea of interpreters as bicultural mediators” (p. 161). The international *Critical Link* conferences on community/public service interpreting have included signed language interpreters on par with spoken language interpreters since their inception in 1995.

A critical discourse analysis placing the profession of sign language interpreters into a relevant historical timestream establishes the link between the steady, persistent and determined progress of the Deaf community to return community-style interpretation back to its own original cultural roots against the imposed domination of an externally imposed system of conference interpreting. Bonnie Sherwood (1987) recognized that Deaf ways are so normal to Deaf people that the norms for interculturally-appropriate

interpreting existed only in practical consciousness. The process of creating discursive consciousness offers insight into the intergroup conflict created by the unexpectedly rapid growth of the sign language interpreting profession.

Recent scholarship by Eileen Forestal (2011), Adam, Carty & Stone (2011), and Christopher Stone (2009), have established the historical basis of Deaf norms for relationship-based community-style simultaneous interpretation. The re-emergence over the past decade of Deaf interpreters, that is, of professional interpreters who are non-hearing and culturally Deaf, has been described as “shifting positionality” (Cokely, 2005b, p. 3). The shift is from a position of dependence or oppression to one of empowerment and agency. Observable “resistance among hearing interpreters to chang[ing] how they [work]” (Forestal, 2011, p. 134) is, I suggest, a “parallel process” (Alderfer & Smith, 1982) that mirrors the resistance of interpretees (as seen in the European Parliament) to working with interpreters at all.

6.3 Disrupting Homolingualism: Social Construction of the Automobile

As I tried to talk with MEPs and officials of the EP about the monologic of multilingualism, for a long time words failed. My own practical consciousness was being stretched. I kept talking about the ‘monolingualism’ I was observing in the popularity of English as lingua franca (ELF), perceiving ELF as resistance to using interpreters. Mirroring the experience of linguist Michael Reddy regarding “frame conflict in our language about language” (1979), my discursive consciousness was limited by the boundaries of my cognition as it had been already shaped through exposure to language and social interaction.

Reddy describes the challenge of his own “frame restructuring” (Schön, 1979):

I confess it took nearly five years for me to come around...what stood in the way was never a counter-argument, but rather the simple inability to think clearly about the matter. My mind would seem to go to sleep at crucial moments, and it was only the mounting weight of more and more evidence that finally forced it to stay awake. (p. 176, 1979).

The (then) new frame of radical subjectivism was the subject of Reddy's struggle to restructure his intellectual/cognitive frame. I was dealing with the practical consciousness of homolingualism: that impulse and desire to communicate with others who *speak the same language* that I witness in myself and others. Homolingualism is evident in intellectual domains and disciplinary sub-fields as well as in regard to natural languages. The Deaf community is remarkable in several respects, one of them being the degree to which they are willing to embrace everyone who relies upon their eyes for language, regardless of their level of fluency, as long as they make the effort to express themselves using a signed language.

The parallel with ELF and every other attempt by language learners to make the phatic gesture of connecting with another human being in their (different) language is obvious. But the Deaf community's extraordinary cultural affinity seems to have endowed them with a capacity for resistance against linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992) that exceeds the combined constraint of homolingual bias and the ideology of speed. It is this capacity that seems to have motivated the development of discursive consciousness regarding the deep practical values of relationally-based community interpreting. So Deaf people resist the machine, and in response the profession of community interpreting continues to evolve toward a pluralinguistic field increasingly characterized by equality of voice. Indigenously, Deaf communities have socially-constructed communication norms that balance the relational aspects of simultaneous

interpretation with the informational aspects of message transfer. The fact that few other linguistic groups have challenged the professional model of the interpreter so clearly and effectively is perhaps a commentary on the scope and intensity of the underlying speed-plus-automatic transmission equation.

In a landmark article in the history of technology, Ronald Kline and Trevor Pinch demonstrate conclusively how “users of technology acted as agents of technological change” (1994: 764). They locate their argument with others (Douglas, 1987; Fischer, 1992; Martin, 1991; Nye, 1990) in “support [of] a more specific claim that the use of an artifact or system has not only resulted in unforeseen consequences, but that users have helped to shape the artifact or system itself” (Nye p. 765). Using a specific model (the Social Construction of Technology, Pinch & Bijker, 1984), Kline and Pinch show how farm workers in the rural United States were so responsive to the invention of the automobile that the automobile industry was compelled to

- 1 counter the activities of specific social groups (including aggressive anti-car campaigns),
- 2 engage in marketing campaigns to discourage the wide range of applications invented for vehicles (and especially the engines in them) by the individuals who purchased them, and
- 3 to develop new products that were responsive to the “interpretive flexibility of the rural auto developed by farm men and women during the first decades of the century (1994, p. 783-784).

As noted, such intensive and contentious social negotiation is strikingly absent from the development of the conference-style system of simultaneous interpretation. Despite the pervasive evidence of interpreter failure at Nuremberg, no one questioned the exclusive loading of meaning-making onto the interpreter(s) alone.

The discourse about the system of SI in the EP shows that simultaneous interpretation, as a social technology, remains the expectation. “You can barely see them,” says an EP official, shading his eyes as if looking into the far distance (F04). “You only meet the interpreters through the glass,” explains an MEP, “That’s why Delegations are so important” (OM44). The interaction taboo of interpretees with interpreters was architecturally formalized after the Nuremberg trials when interpreters were moved off the floor and out of the immediate social interaction into separate, segregated booths: behind the glass. The argument being constructed here is not to un-do the physical arrangements, but rather to explore the social and discursive codes that have reduced the expression, effectiveness, and equality of Members’ voices. How have Members come to believe in homolingual communication in such a pluralingual environment?

6.4 Deaf Invention

As an historical development, the unexpectedly rapid growth of the signed language interpreting profession in the U.S. catapulted the American Deaf Community into confrontation with the larger “hearing” world. This is a classic case of intergroup conflict. What was striking about the institutional climate of the U.S. signed language interpreting profession in the 1980s and ‘90s was how it became an extended site for a ferocious battle by culturally Deaf people to preserve ASL and residential schools for the Deaf as incubators for a vibrant, empowered, diverse cultural community within an encompassing American national identity. (Nationalism was not an overt part of the ASL/English bilingual-bicultural movement for cultural education and language preservation, but its assumptions are microsocially embedded (e.g., Wilcox 1989) in the

gender and class structure of prominent Deaf activists, protestors, and educators and macrosocially evident in the widespread “English Only” backlash against all bilingual education programs in the US (e.g., Olson, 1991).

There are many factors feeding the successes and sustained passion of ASL/English bilingual and bicultural activists. Certainly, the pervasiveness of cultural violations (notably by signed language interpreters, teachers of deaf students, and others) throughout the 1970s and 1980s (not to mention the previous century of repression) contributed to the professional organization of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf becoming a focal point for concentrated criticism. Judgments rendered by American Deaf participants in interpreted communication combine outcome with delivery. This combination clearly reflects a cultural imperative to evaluate interpreter performance according to Deaf-defined criteria rather than criteria imposed externally by non-Deaf people.

The ultimate measure of success for intercultural, interpreted communication was historically defined by the Deaf community in regard to ghostwriters, who were valued because (among other skills) they could speak English well, but “the judgment for ‘speaking well’ comes from *the success of the interaction* rather than the intelligibility of the speech as judged by non-Deaf people” (emphasis added, Adam, Carty & Stone, 2011, p. 383). Also, assumptions about the English fluency of Deaf ghostwriters spread “by ‘word of mouth’ with respect to *the success of previous correspondence or interaction*” (emphasis added, Adam, Carty & Stone, 2011, p. 386). These judgments are based in a *future* orientation to time, the outcome of interpretation in relational terms of satisfactory mutual understanding, rather than a past orientation to time, which emphasizes the

accuracy of ‘translation’ [sic] by looking ‘backward’ as it were, to a fixed, supposedly immutable and inerrant, ‘source message.’

A similar emphasis on Deaf-defined criteria for the quality of interpreting is expressed by Deaf translator/interpreters working in broadcast television, who place “the greatest importance on the Deaf consumer understanding [the target language] information” (Stone, 2009, p. 109). This informational emphasis, however, is inherently relational, i.e., it highlights the “construction of relevance” (p. 171) between the Deaf Translator/Interpreter and their audience as essential to the transmission of information. The precedent for the relational model used in broadcast television interpreting/ translating exists in the traditional Deaf culture practice of ghostwriting (Adam, Carty and Stone, 2011), and the practices and principles of such a relational model are evident in the work of a growing group of professional Deaf interpreters in the United States (Forestal, 2011; Stone, 2009).

6.4.1 Back Reaction from the Deaf Center

Carol Padden and Tom Humphries wrote an essay called, “A Different Center,” in which they explained how the “the meanings of DEAF and ‘deaf’ are, at the very least, not the same. DEAF is a means of identifying the group and one’s connection to it, and ‘deaf’ is a means of commenting on one’s inability to speak and hear” (1988, p. 33).²²¹ Padden & Humphries recount a friend’s confusion in understanding the label, ‘HARD-OF-

²²¹ Throughout this dissertation, Deaf is always capitalized to signify the identity group. Hearing and speaking ability has not been addressed, neither literally nor metaphorically. Padden & Humphries’ essay is in *Deaf in America: Voices from a Culture*.

HEARING,’ which is literally defined in exactly opposite terms depending on the central point of reference. In spoken English, the measurement is made from the assumed standard of sound, so a little hard-of-hearing means a person can hear quite a lot. Very hard-of-hearing is someone approaching auditory deafness. However, from the culturally Deaf center, “A-LITTLE HARD-OF-HEARING is a small deviation from DEAF, and thus is used for someone who is only slightly hearing. VERY HARD-OF-HEARING is someone who departs from the center greatly, thus someone who can hear quite well” (p. 41)

A common source of so-called mistakes and misunderstandings in simultaneously-interpreted intercultural transactions comes from the juxtapositions of

larger world[s] of meaning where there are conventions for describing relationships between conditions and identities. Within this world of meaning—compared [in this example] to that of English and others—there is a different alignment, toward a different center. (p. 42)

Despite the shock and disillusionment of intergroup conflict, the Deaf center has held. The core cultural values of ensuring mutual understanding and relational relevance have acted back on interpreting researcher-practitioners, who have steadily studied and reflected upon the objects of Deaf criticism and begun to provide models that explain and illustrate the concerns at the heart of community interpreting as social transaction.

Dean and Pollard’s (2001) Demand-Control Schema rejects “one static level of [linguistic] demand” (p. 5) and foregrounds that “interpreting is best understood as a *practice profession* rather than a technical profession (Dean & Pollard, 2011, p. 156).

Practice professions like medicine, teaching and law enforcement do involve the learning and application of technical skills, but these technical skills are always applied in dynamic, interactive social context (i.e., with patients, students and citizens/suspects, respectively). In contrast, technical professions such as laboratory science and engineering apply technical skills in situations that are more removed from social interaction with consumers. (2011, p. 156)

Recognizing interpreting as a practice profession allows the first major move of recognizing the non-linguistic demands of the work. The DC-S emerges from a theory of occupational stress which Dean and Pollard adapted from Karasek (1979). Karasek's "model posits two phenomenological dimensions that affect workers in a given setting or situation. These dimensions are termed *demand* and *control*, and the 'strength' of each dimension ranges from low to high" (in Dean & Pollard, 2001, p. 2)

The term *demand* refers to the requirements of a job, which may include aspects of the environment, the actual task being performed, and other factors that "act upon" the individual. The term *control* refers to the degree to which the individual has the power to "act upon" the demands presented by the job, perhaps by making decisions, bringing skills or resources to bear on the task, or altering the environment or other aspects of the task demand. (p. 2)

In addition to explicating the ways demands and controls appear in simultaneous interpretation, Dean and Pollard introduced the concept of *decision latitude* from Karasek and his colleague Töres Thorell to the field as a control element within interpreters' professional practice and performances of interpreting.

Dean and Pollard explain that their "concept of control includes the skills and other resources a worker has to cope with demands presented to him [or her] and especially [her or] his degree of authority and freedom to exercise decisions about which skills and resources to employ and how to do so" (p. 6). The concept and practice of decision latitude is now being elaborated as a crucial element of "relational autonomy" in which interpreters "[develop] awareness of the various aspects of autonomous decision-making" (Witter-Merithew et al, 2010, p. 49).

Interpreter autonomy is in reality *relational* as a result of the inherent social structures upon which it depends for its existence...effective autonomy is achieved when the social conditions that support it are in

place and give the practitioner—and consumers—the confidence to take charge of choices. (p. 50)

Relational autonomy and decision latitude, within an identified “constellation of demands” (Dean & Pollard, 2011, p. 164) and the growing discursive consciousness of a broad range of controls (for interpreters and for interpretees), cohere in a new, multidimensional model of the interpreter’s role space.

Role space is “dynamic, reasoned, situational, and negotiable” according to Lee & Llewellyn-Jones (2011). See Figure 2. The interpreter’s role space is defined and delineated by three primary areas that they represent on a three-dimensional X, Y, and Z cube. In their model, the horizontal axis, X, indicates the realm of participation alignment (e.g., Garrod & Pickering, 2006); the vertical axis, Y, indicates the dimension of interaction management (e.g., Grice, 1968; Giles, Coupland & Coupland 1991); and the forward-back Z axis represents the presentation of self (e.g., Goffman, 1981). Lee and Llewellyn’s basic premise involves a distinction and a similarity between the interpreter(s) and interpretees:

The interpreter has a different reason for being in the interaction compared with the other participants; however, interpreters can avail themselves of some of the same strategies used by the other participants to present themselves in the interaction. (2011, p. 4)

Rather than relying upon a deontological ethical code with strict prescriptive rules, they call upon a standard of interpreter integrity to ground “a sense that what is happening is appropriate for *this* given interaction” (p. 3).

Individual decisions made by an interpreter are not made in isolation from one another; rather the interactions among decisions (and not a single decision point itself) creates the manifestation of the role of an interpreter in a given interaction. (p. 2)

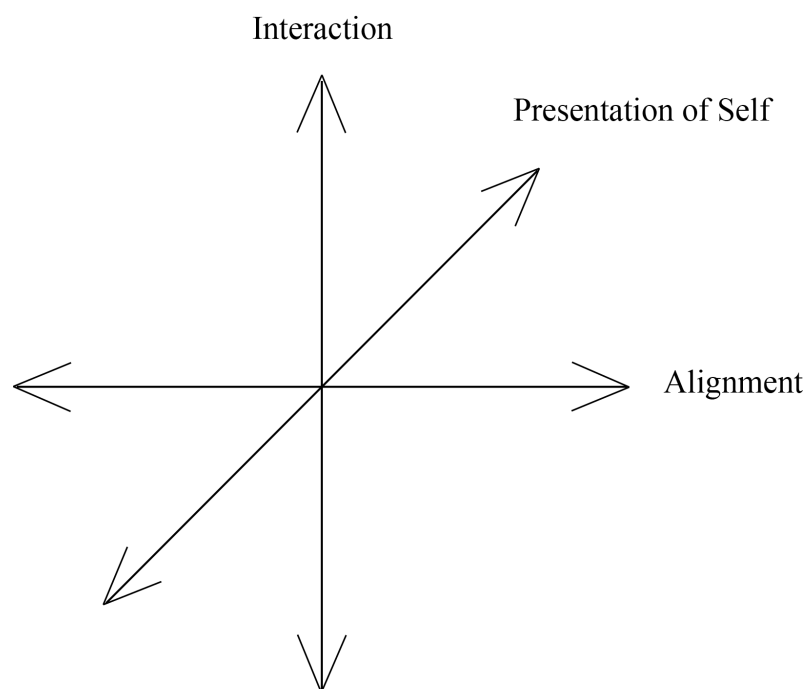


Figure 2. Interaction Among Three Axes of Interpreter Role Space. Reprinted with permission from *International Journal of Interpreter Education*. (Lee and Llewellyn-Jones, 2013).

This integrity requires the relational autonomy called for by Witter-Merithew et al (2010) and echoed by Roderick Jones (2014): “our training should ... help our students and future colleagues ... to acquire the autonomy to develop their own interpreting strategies, such that they can develop over the whole course of their career” (p. 9).

Role space replaces the one-dimensional conception of the interpreter as a passive instrument with a technical function. Interpreted interaction is not characterized by homolingual continuous action, but is rather a series of one-way turns in which the interpreter fluidly adjusts alignment with participants in keeping with emergent interpersonal and intercultural demands, with reference to the circumstances of context. The initial unfamiliarity of a simultaneously-interpreted, plurilingual communicative arrangement does not need to lead to non-cooperative, non-accommodating, and non-

aligning behaviors by a machine model interpreter. *That*, Llewellyn-Jones and Lee argue, is “not natural communication” (*Conference Handout*, 2012).

While the focus here has been on community interpreting for the Deaf, Diriker’s (2004) study of academic conference interpreting discovered “anecdotal accounts of real-life SI assignments ...[that] challenge the analogy of ‘interpreters as electronic devices’ and foreground the individual, as well as the social factors, that influence the interpreting process” (pp. 47-48). In sum, Dean and Pollard (2012) argue that conceptualizing the work of simultaneous interpretation in terms of demands and controls “matters” (p. 80) because the Demand-Control Schema provides “a concrete method for thinking about...the work and work decisions ... [and] to replace intuitive or habitual work processes with conscious and deliberate ones” (p. 79).

6.5 Holding Time with a Relational Model of SI

The stunning feature at the Deaf center regarding simultaneous interpreting is the imperative to hold time.²²² Buber’s metaphor of holding ground may be a way to begin to explain practical skills of the evolved interpreter, including making active decisions about

²²² The idea of this generative metaphor (Schön, 1998) is that Buber’s (1923) notion of “holding ground” provides an initial label for describing what Deaf interpreters, ghostwriters, and evolved and schooled/ally interpreters do that is most appreciated by Deaf interpretees during interpreted interaction. Holding ground is a metaphor for ethical interpersonal communication: it specifically refers to a co-constructed interactive process in which a person (“I”) holds your own ground while being open to the other (“Thou”). Buber’s concept of holding ground is elaborated by many scholars, including Stewart (2006) and Pearce (1994/2007).

In practice, holding ground means that you should not abandon or betray your own commitments, values, beliefs, and perspectives in order to ‘be with,’ engage with or listen to another – but rather that you can hold these while also holding—even if temporarily—the reported ideas, experiences, beliefs, perspectives, and even challenges of another. (J. Brooks, personal communication, August 25, 2012)

shifting functional alignments within the domain of time. Forestal (2011) found, for instance, that one of the most frequent reasons Deaf interpreters²²³ paused a research video to share their thinking with her was to “express reactions toward the HI and the dialogue between the HI and the HC” (p. 87).²²⁴ Their most common criticism involved the failure of the hearing interpreter to manage or ‘hold’ time. In Boyle’s (2006) story, rather than forcing a continuation of interaction with an apparently disinterested police officer, the evolved interpreter shifts to a kind of consecutive interpreting that divides time among respective interpretees, ultimately enabling important information to be communicated while simultaneously validating Dana’s humanity (and taking nothing away from the officer, whose attention is diffused by multiple responsibilities at the scene of a crime).

References by the Deaf interpreters to temporality in Forestal’s (2011) study are most prevalent when the information is most dense. This was also when Deaf Interpreter (DI) research participants “discuss[ed] how the HI [Hearing Interpreter] should work with the participants in terms of chunking the information differently or when they wanted to convey the material to the DC [Deaf consumer]” (p. 87). This is when participants “wanted to tell the HI to ‘hold on or slow down’” (Participant F, p. 77), that

²²³ The situation of two sign language interpreters working together, one who is Deaf and one who is Hearing, is comparable to *relay* interpreting in the European Parliament. In this case, the Hearing interpreter renders spoken English into sign language and the Deaf interpreter is afforded the role space and decision latitude to undertake the labor of making sure the information is understood by Deaf interpretees. Likewise, a similar process should occur in the other direction, when the burden is on the Hearing interpreter to make sure that the Hearing interpretee understands.

²²⁴ Forestal’s codes are HC: Hearing Consumer, HI: Hearing Interpreter, DI: Deaf Interpreter, and DC: Deaf Consumer.

“the HC [Hearing consumer] was going on too long on one part and ... should pause” (Forestal, p. 81), or, “There is a run on here. I can’t see any separate ideas...Oh boy...HI is going on too long...hold on...” “Wait, I would ask to stop...Hold on” (Participant B, p. 79), or “hold it...to go at a slower pace” (Participant D, p. 73).

“Taking the time to explain” (Participant D, as cited in Forestal, 2011, p. 71) was most necessary when the information was “very detailed” (Forestal, p. 70). “Whoa, there are so many things to point out...I will ask the HI to pause here...” (Participant B, p. 80). In fact, the highest percentage ($21/120 = 18\%$) of video stoppages per section of the video occurred during the (staged) discussion of the US Federal Housing Authority’s mortgage loan criteria. Forestal concluded there was “a lot of information to go through” (Participant B, p. 84), so “more pauses would be needed for clarification and additional time to review” (p. 84). For instance, in the densest chunk of information, there were “three things to explain...ask the HI to stop [to] allow [more time]... [to give] each one at a time, rather than pour all three at once” (Participant B, p. 74).

The temporal problem identified by Forestal’s (2011) participants is twofold, involving both the duration of turns and the density of information. Sometimes, they identify “the HC was talking was too long...the HI will have to notify the [HC]...to break up the information more...and [stop] more often” (Participant F, p. 76). Other times they “expressed a wish that ‘[the HI] would stop long enough to allow time to interpret’” (Participant F, p. 76). They suggest two specific remedies: for “the information to be parceled out in smaller chunks or pause as cued by the DI” (Forestal, p. 75). Forestal’s findings on the density of information are in keeping with Vuorikoski’s (2004) research on spoken language source texts in the European Parliament.

Problems with source texts and adequately paced turn-taking between the HI and DI in relay are parallel problems that HIs frequently have with HCs. What Deaf interpreters are asking of their hearing interpreter teammates is what hearing interpreters, both evolved and schooled/allies, have been ‘asking’ (or needing to ask!) of interpretees since professional signed language interpreting began: care about achieving mutual understanding and participate in the co-construction of relationships, rather than just letting them happen as fallout from the transmission machine’s insistence on what Participant F described as the “non-stop flow of information” (p. 83).

The Deaf interpreters sought to be authorized to manage time in order to achieve a “balance of working” with both the Deaf and Hearing consumers (Participant E, as cited in Forestal, 2011, p. 70). This distinguishes the interaction component of Forestal’s research from the television audience translator/interpreters in Stone’s (2009) research. Otherwise, U.S. Deaf interpreters expressed the same goals and strategies as British Translator/Interpreters: to “make sure the DC understood before moving on to the next part” (Participant E, p. 70); not “throw [information]...without processing” (Participant B, p. 91); avoid marginalization (p. 121); and to create “an interactive dialogue” (p. 121).

Dialogic communication is needed by Deaf interpreters with the hearing interpreter teammate just as much as with the deaf consumer: this parallel process also parallels the hearing interpreter’s need for dialogue with the hearing interpretee. Here is the rub of the original interaction taboo of pretending the interpreter is invisible being extended into relay processes between team interpreters. Hope for the social transformation called for by Forestal (2011) resides in this co-constructive social transaction. If Deaf interpreters win their agency and are authorized to utilize role space

and hold time, the achievement may spread to spoken language interpreters and interpretees, establishing a relational and identity-aware model for community interpreting.

6.5.1 Interpreters' Unconsciousness

The greatest support for the reality of human consciousness is that one does not know what one does not know until it is learned. Some things are learned as a result of intentional study; other things are learned unwillingly, as if by force. There are things a person comes to know which seem appallingly obvious in retrospect, and other things one can come to know that are simply informative or intriguing. Learning that is significant is often accompanied by emotion: this is illustrated by Archimedes' expression of "Eureka!" and backed up by neuroscientific studies on insight, commonly thought of as 'Aha!' moments (Kounios and Beeman, 2009). Surprise indicates the presence of something new or unexpected. This is why a study on omissions by sign language interpreters caught my attention, because participants and researchers expressed "amazement" (Napier, 2002, p. 160) and "astonishment" (p. 178) when they realized "as much information is lost *unconsciously*, as is selectively omitted as part of a conscious linguistic process" (emphasis added, p. 178).

The context of Napier's study is to demonstrate that interpreter omissions are often *strategic*. That is, the interpreter makes a conscious decision to omit information in service of accomplishing another task or aspect of the interpreting process.²²⁵ She also

²²⁵ This aspect of conscious, strategic omissions is not taken up by Vuorikoski, who uses omissions as a measure in her study but not as an automatic measure of failure (2004, p. 31).

finds that omissions occur that interpreters are aware of but are somehow unable to do anything about. Although Napier does not elaborate it is not hard to surmise that what prevents interpreters from addressing omissions they are aware of and do not want to make are the dynamics of social interaction. Interpretees' criticisms might be more productive if they learned and understood this. The typical linguistic model tends to characterize any omissions as an interpreter failure, because the linguistic model only focuses upon the transfer of information. (Which is why Vuorikoski augmented her method.²²⁶) However if Napier's findings are evaluated from an identity and relationship perspective, the range of omission types suggests an impasse in social interaction. The problem then, is apparently not resolvable by the linguistic model. A new paradigm that acknowledges social interaction might enable more adaptation. For instance, a social transaction paradigm allows the speculation that the interpreter cannot change unless the interpretees change, too.

6.5.2 Interpreter Omission

Napier (2002) problematizes the commonsense assumption that interpretational omissions are always errors or mistakes of transmission. Her goal is to establish selective reductions (of utterances in the source language) as a metacognitive strategy of interpreters to enhance message equivalence (of utterances in the target language). In other words, Napier documents conscious effort on behalf of interpreters to contribute to

²²⁶ “While omissions, substitutions and errors may be observed in quantitative terms, SI quality is not based on word-for-word equivalence only... The present study will move a step forward on the basis of modern SI theory with the aim of finding a method for analysing how to operationalize the elusive 'gist' of the message” (2004, p. 31).

“meaning potential” (p. 179).²²⁷ To accomplish this task, Napier utilizes an omission taxonomy she invented in 2001, and describes the limits of consciousness *and unconsciousness* made evident through the research project’s findings in the stages of task review and final reflection. The distribution of results across the awareness continuum provides a foundation for the development of an epistemology of SI premised on interaction (rather than, as it is presently, interaction-tacked-on to the previously-established functional linguistic model).

Napier designed a five-type continuum of “potential interpreting omissions based on levels of consciousness and strategic-ness” (p. 84). See Figure 2. From left to right the continuum proceeds from most conscious (strategic) to least conscious (unaware). She places *conscious strategic* decisions to omit at the left end and completely *unconscious* omissions at the other end, with three degrees of gradient between them. Results show that the three intermediate types of omissions, those that are made or recognized by the interpreter as they occur but without deliberate strategic intent, occur with particular features of language use that prefigure Vuorikoski’s (2004) and Forestal’s (2011) findings, including subject-specific terminology, names, repetition and redundancy, ambiguity and idioms, and inaudible words or phrases.

²²⁷ Napier’s construct of “meaning potential” is undefined but might a synonym (or similarly relative to) the sociolinguistic concept of voice (Blommaert, 2004). Napier (2002) “suggest[s] that omissions should be considered within a framework of *omission potential*...by doing so, it is possible for interpreters to recognize the sociolinguistic and sociocultural factors that may influence their production of different omission types. The framework allows for recognition of the fact that omissions can be used strategically to achieve the meaning potential of an utterance, but there is also the potential to make erroneous omissions, which may skew the contextual force of the message” (emphasis in original, p. 179).

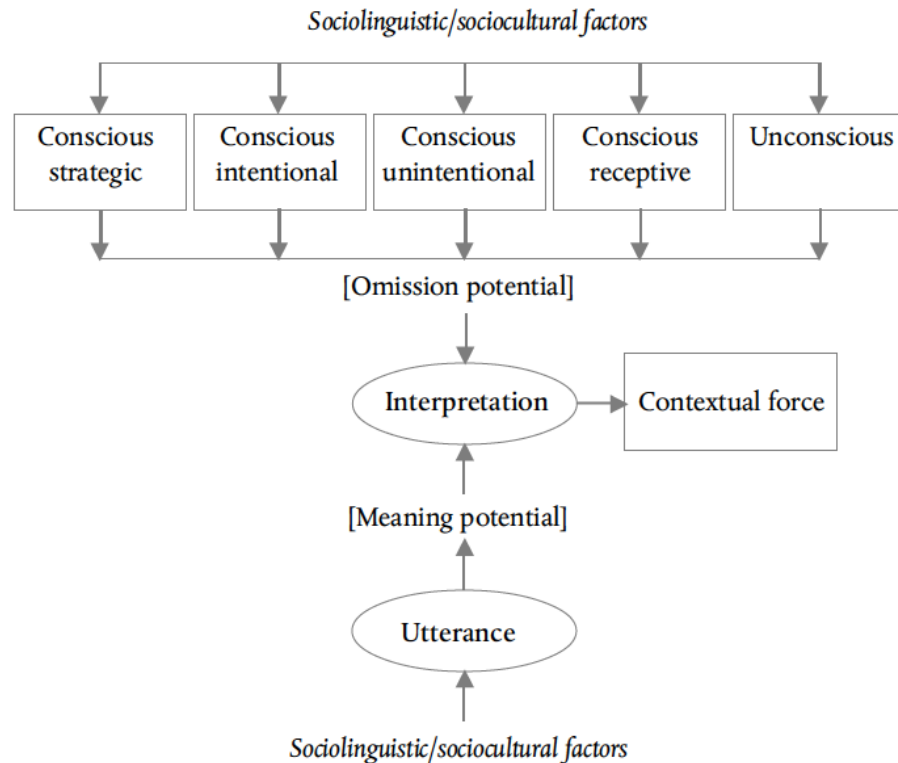


Figure 3. Napier's Interpreter Omission Taxonomy (reprinted with permission from Sign Language Interpreting: Linguistic Coping Strategies, 2002, p. 179).

Napier carefully identifies these linguistic components of speaker utterances in order to establish a distinction between omissions that interpreters are aware of at the moment of their occurrence but *did not necessarily wish to make* from omissions that interpreters *made with full strategic intentionality* to enhance clarity or organization of a message. The relative equivalence, percentagewise, at both ends of the consciousness spectrum is intriguing: twenty-seven percent of the total number of omissions (of all five types, combined) were of the highest order of *strategic consciousness* and twenty-six percent were completely *unconscious*, with the remaining 47% of omissions spread among the three intermediate but inadvertent types.

Two startling ramifications leap to view. First, nearly one half of omissions occur for reasons of source text production or social transaction among interpretees. Second, roughly equal amounts of omissions qualify as *conscious strategic* selective reductions (i.e., are planned with an eye to the future, 27%) and as *unconscious* omissions (specifically not within the awareness of the interpreter, 26%). Napier reports the first-time realization of some participating interpreters at discovering “the commentary going on in their own head” (p. 160), described as an “internal self-critical commentary” (p. 159) that all ten of the interpreters who participated in her study utilized *with or without* strategic consciousness. These findings open new ground for the field; it could represent a move toward a new kind of discursive consciousness.

Conscious decision-making based on metalinguistic awareness is revealed to be an under-acknowledged component of the interpreter’s skillset (Napier, 2002). Most surprising to Napier and the participating interpreters, was the finding that “as much information is lost unconsciously, as is selectively omitted as part of a conscious linguistic process” (p. 178). In other words, despite professional training and as attentive as interpreters are to source language messages and target language meanings, interpreters do unknowingly miss a measurable quantity of information.

The rigor of Napier’s research design enabled the identification of “specific features of language use [that] elicited the occurrence of particular omissions” (p. 148). The common characteristic of all these features (listed above) is their origin: they are elements of production of the source language. Notice how the research gaze is focused at the linguistic level of diction and lexicalization, rather than on the interpersonal or psychosocial dynamics of interaction. Because of Napier’s precision and expertise an

example is available. One line of source text produced the highest percentage of unconscious omissions.

Taken in isolation, “So, over to you for a minute,” is a simple sentence. No density of subject matter or terminology, nothing obscure or highly specific. The explanations provided by participating interpreters as to why this particular utterance was omitted make sense. Napier reports:

All the respondents remarked that they probably had not heard this phrase because they were still concentrating on the difficult interpretation of the previous sentence...and therefore experienced cognitive overload. (p. 153)

Setton’s (1999) cognitive-pragmatic reasons for failure are not marshalled; Napier allows the interpreter’s self-report stand. She also does not describe any exploration with her participants of the communicative action implied in the utterance. Given that the source text is explicitly characterized as a monologue (it is a lecture given by a professor to college students), this particular phrase represents a change in footing.²²⁸ In her literature review, Napier refers to Erving Goffman’s (1981) concept of footing as one of the ways speakers define their relationship with an audience (p. 50). In particular, footing has to do with the way speakers align themselves within a particular frame for the communication event. Footing is crucial to Lee & Llewellyn-Jones’ (2013) depiction of interpreters’ shifting alignments with participants in role space.

Footing is crucial to Lee & Llewellyn-Jones’ (2013) depiction of interpreters’ shifting alignments with participants in role space, because it is particularly useful for

²²⁸ Tebbel might identify the speech act, “So, over to you for a minute,” as a framing move with the metalinguistic function of alerting students to a shift in the genre stages of classroom interaction (2009, p. 210).

noting changes in interaction dynamics, such as the signal from a professor that there will be a shift from the monologue of a didactic lecture to participatory dialogue, perhaps in the form of a question-and-answer session or a period of open discussion. In other words, what is suggested by Napier's text, even though she does not spell it out, is that some unconscious omissions during simultaneous interpretations *may* occur as the result of a combination of linguistic and dynamical factors, not exclusively on the basis of lexical complexity or other problems with the source text. If I put myself in this situation as an academic interpreter, for instance, and I have become accustomed to the mode of delivery, then I may not even be tuned to the possibility of a shift in the interaction and certainly not while struggling with some particularly dense content.²²⁹

The evidence that omissions may occur for reasons that are not lexical, or for reasons in addition to what can be explained by functional linguistics, reaches toward the meaning potential of the domain of inquiry that Napier opens up. She herself is explicit and consistent in her focus on *linguistic* coping strategies. However a change in footing is an interaction dynamic that interpretees can become aware of and use as a moment to assert shared responsibility for the quality of communication and understanding in the interpreted interaction. Notice, for instance, the temporal delimitation, "for a minute." Without having been alerted to the change in interaction structure, students relying upon

²²⁹ Another possibility, that the interactional shift is too obvious to be expressed, is suggested by one of Vuorikoski's findings in regard to references to *democracy* in MEPs speeches. "The material at hand reveals an unsystematic rendering by the interpreters of these key concepts and key points that are related to democracy. The word 'democracy' in its various forms is often omitted as if it were something self-evident that does not have to be repeated" (2004, p. 129).

the SI are automatically disadvantaged unless/until other interpretees notice and co-create adequate shared time for everyone's participation.

As a discourse process, the effect of isolating research to only the linguistic level of simultaneous interpretation is to keep the focus of analysis on *what interpreters do* (with languages) while keeping the analytical gaze averted from *what the interpretees are doing* (in co-constructing relationships). In Napier's (2002) case study, the interpretees include every non-deaf student in the class as well as the Deaf student(s) as co-learners. The professor is the responsible figure with the most authorization to manage the dynamics of interpreted intercultural communication. The discursive *and social* isolation of the interpreter that is reproduced in researcher discourse reinforces social practice that de-authorizes *both* interpreters and interpretees from addressing or otherwise attempting to repair common communication breakdowns. At least interpretees could begin to learn the symptoms for the large percentage of accidental, unintended omissions (47%) that occur within the interpreter's awareness but cannot (currently) be remedied because of limitations imposed on the role. The interaction taboo (Kent, 2012) is what makes interventions to restore omitted information seem beyond control.

Such skills development would also create openings for interpretees to notice other deviations from the desired quality of communication of which the interpreter may be unaware. While it is obvious that the pace and density of delivery are significant in the 'over to you' instance (and, perhaps less obviously, the turn-taking pace), Napier's overall findings in this study suggest that there is no stand-alone factor that influences the rate or type of inadvertent omissions, but instead that there is a combination of unfamiliarities:

- 1 lacking familiarity with the specific knowledge domain encompassed by the subject of the communication event, and
- 2 lacking familiarity with the conventions of discourse use characteristic of the setting or scene of the communication event.

In other words, one zone of unfamiliarity involves particular content (a, above), the other zone of unfamiliarity involves institutional process (b, above), and the two are interrelated in terms of their relative influence on interpreter *and* *interpretee* effectiveness in a simultaneously-interpreted communication event (again, in keeping with Forestal (2011) and Vuorikoski (2004)). While professional interpreters make varying degrees of effort to become familiar with both the genre setting and the particular subject matter, the interactive challenges of intercultural communication are not able to be resolved without the concern and involvement of interpretees.

If interpretees are concerned with the subset of omissions that interpreters make strategically (as the Deaf respondents who participated in a panel organized by Napier state that they are), one way to build shared responsibility and enhance quality might involve collaborative practice with identifying and resolving the omissions that interpreters do not wish to make but are constrained from acknowledging have occurred. This applies equally to the concerns MEPs expressed about the quality of interpreting in the EP. Such an endeavour will necessarily invite the discovery of omissions that were made unconsciously, as well as open inquiry into the reasons supporting omissions made strategically.

What could prove to be the long-term significance of Napier's work on omissions is that the development of this discourse theme may result in an increase of proactive accountability by original speakers and receivers: by the former in the generation of

source texts and by the latter in confirming comprehension. Increased responsibility by interpretees in terms of diction, delivery and reception accompanied by improved skill in perceiving and responding to the dynamics of interaction could constitute a substantial leap toward mutual accountability for co-creating meanings and understandings during simultaneously-interpreted communication. Rather than reinforcing premises that the interpreter must cope alone, analysis and training could evolve to embrace the full implications of the interactionist paradigm.

In discovering the interpreter's individual unconscious regarding unknown omissions, Napier (2002) opens the possibility of discovering additional contents of unconsciousness within the entire field of Interpreting Studies. She cites a broad literature specific to metalinguistic awareness but only a small subset (1996-2000, at the time of her publication) is within the domain of interpretation (most of her references to metalinguistics are drawn from research on literacy). It is appropo, therefore, that Napier reports that most participants in her study "only became conscious" of their applied metalinguistic competence when they began talking about it (p. 191). In other words, they began to develop aspects of their practical consciousness into discursive consciousness. In addition to linking metacommunication and consciousness, Napier establishes equivalence between spoken and signed language interpreting of university lectures, bridging as well the perceived gap between conference and community interpreting.

6.6 Interpreting as Chronotopic Calibration: Making Timespace Visible

Many Members of the European Parliament are sophisticated users of simultaneous interpretation. Their discourse about conference SI in the EP overemphasizes interpreter omissions and misunderstandings probably because this is the

most tangible evidence of not being ‘in control’ of the plurilingual communication process. MEPs either overlook or are unaware of the other reasons for interpreter omissions, such as their own complicity in delivering source texts rife with non-interpretable features. Only a few MEPs recognize the possibility of omissions that are made strategically by interpreters in order to refine a point and enhance voice. Many MEPs do concede the pressures of the context that force interpreter omissions by virtue of institutional demands not to slow down or stop the proceedings.

Many members of Deaf cultures are also sophisticated users of simultaneous interpretation. Their discourse about community SI and sign language interpreters overemphasizes the power position of the interpreter because this is the most tangible evidence of not being ‘in control’ of the plurilingual communication process. Deaf interpretees often overlook or are unaware of omissions (unless they are informed by another bilingual participant, in similar fashion to an MEP’s Assistant monitoring interpreted renditions by European Parliament interpreters). Some Deaf interpretees recognize conscious omission strategies of interpreters for refining voice within the given institutional context. Many Deaf interpretees also recognize time pressure and other factors adversely affecting the decision latitude of all participants, including the interpreters. Usually any manifestation of these is called oppression.

As reference groups for each other, conference and community interpreting participants (interpretees and interpreters alike) bring language ideology into view, helping us perceive flaws in the laissez-faire assumption that the invisible hand of the translation machine is sufficient. The critical lens will be sharpened by including informal interpreters in the field of international business as another comparison group.

Automatic processes of this machine, human-enabled or not, cannot regenerate human diversity or cultivate collective intelligence. The transmission machine only drives the road of homolingualism. Its passengers, interpretees and interpreters, are indeed out of control, subject to the constraints of a fancified IBM system designed for speed, now with safeties disabled.

Carefully-created checks and balances for ensuring shared understanding made the original use of the IBM system at Nuremberg capable of handling the pluralinguistic challenge of simultaneous interpreting. Communication rituals indigenous to the cultural practices of Deaf people ensure understanding by creating the time to check in, ask questions, and explain. Interpreters and interpretees who cede their agency, their relational autonomy (Witter-Merithew et al, 2010), to the dictates of the transmission machine, whether in conference or community settings, surrender culture, identity and the power of voice. Only humans in collaboration with each other can adapt to the flux of pluralingualist priorities during interpreted transaction.

This human factor of deciding, consciously, to choose the mode of social transaction and its target, authorizes the reference group comparison of interpreters to managers and administrators in international business.²³⁰ Although it is unlikely that the established term for distinguishing conference and community interpreting will evolve from *mode* to *timespace calibration*, perhaps mode can come to include chronotopic

²³⁰ “Reference group theory which *systematically* takes account of *positive* orientations toward non-membership groups can serve as a corrective of [Sumner’s] prematurely restricted conclusion [that negative associations are usually directed to outsiders and positive associations reserved for insiders]. In-groups and out-groups are often sub-groups within a larger social organization, and are always potentially so, since a new social integration can encompass previously separated groups” (Merton, 1957, p. 298-299).

calibration as part of its essential definition. Conference interpreting, with its emphasis on information, tends to homolingualism by erasing difference. Community interpreting, with its emphasis on identity and relationship, tends to pluralingualism by maintaining cultural difference. In each case, interpreters are stewards of both aims: information void of identity (re)generates a homolingual machine; identity without information promotes stereotypes and prejudice; each of these reifies structural inequality.

When identity and information come into conflict or competition, interpreters become stewards of the transactive social relationships among interpretees in that moment of timespace. Pluralingual transaction, by definition, does not conform to any one homolingualism. Instances of non-awareness, of unconscious omission or misunderstanding when you think you've understood but you have not (the Johari Window zone of 'not knowing what you don't know'),²³¹ will occur for everyone, interpretees as well as interpreters. Moments of uncertainty and not knowing ought to be more frequent in interpreted communication than in homolingual transactions, if only because homolingualism reinforces similarities and mutually disregards deviations.

Social interpreting transcends the traditional modes of conference and community interpreting by prioritizing the immediate relationship among interpretees in service of the emergent aspect of communication that is most salient in the lived experience of

²³¹ The Johari Window is a model for interpersonal interaction represented in a two-by-two grid. The horizontal axis is the self, the vertical axis is the other. The columns represent what is known and not known to you and the other, resulting in four quadrants. Luft (1984) labels the quadrants open, blind, hidden, and unknown. Open is what both you (the self) and the other know; blind is what they know about you that you're unaware of; hidden is what you know that they don't; and unknown "refers to behaviors, feelings and motivation known neither to the self nor to others" (p. 61).

group dynamics: information or identity. Social interpreting is about helping interpretees connect: intellectually (premised in mutually comprehending information) or phatically (based in a felt commonality). Social interpreting may involve light and humorous topics, but its emphasis on 'the social' is to highlight the relationships (when necessary) so that information shared is information understood. Shifting between the chronotopes of information and identity is a transcultural calibration made possible by asserting human agency within the special communication practice of simultaneous interpretation.

CHAPTER 7

SIMULTANEOUS SOCIAL TRANSACTION, PLURALINGUALISM AND SHARED IDENTITY

The reference points established to contextualize this critical discourse analysis (consciousness, control, reference groups (culture), and voice) have been used to show a structure to the discourse about SI in the EP.²³² Hopefully it demonstrates how discursive consciousness can be developed from practical consciousness through the rigorous application of action learning. The discourse shows a convergence of two frames for thinking about language, language difference, and the social innovation of simultaneous interpretation. One frame is the European Union's comprehensive strategy for multilingualism and the other frame is the regime of controlled multilingualism governing how Members can and cannot use the system of simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament.

Embedded within these interlocking frames are ideas about language and communication that emanate from history and animate ideology about social interaction and how identities come to be shared. "There are two ways to understand European identity," explained an MEP, "through a common same language or putting the national first, and Europe second" (NM20). This is the European experience, predicated on the forcible standardization of language to consolidate nation-states through the construction

²³² Other relevant histories about interpreting not cross-correlated here include Jesús Baigorri Jalón (1999), Aleksandr Šveitser (1999), Kayoko Takeda (2010), Małgorzata Tryuk (2010), and Wolfram Wilss (1999).

of an imaginary community (Anderson, 1983).²³³ The European Union today is trying to counteract that historical harnessing of homolingualism, but they are constrained from a creative solution because they have not (yet) been able re-frame the problem. Hence, as the discourse shows, there are problematic communication dynamics, i.e., an interaction taboo and the interpersonal reduction of interpreters to machine parts, which together feed doubt about the real value of simultaneous interpretation. Ineffective modeling of plurilingualism as a unifying field of linguistic equality is now hypothesized as a reason that the European Parliament has failed to inspire a sense of commonality among Europeans across the European Union.

7.1 The Language Problem

In *Methodology for the Human Sciences*, Mikhael Bakhtin refers to “Humboldt’s main problem: the multiplicity of languages,” adding, parenthetically, “the premise and the background of the problem – the unity of the human race” (1986, p. 168). Wilhelm von Humboldt put ‘the problem’ this way:

Just as individuals by the power of their idiosyncrasies impart to the human intellect a new impetus in uncharted directions, nations may do the same for linguistic formation. However, between linguistic structure and success in all other types of intellectual activity, there prevails an

²³³ Kroskrity (2000) describes how Michael Silverstein (2000) uses “the Whorfian model as a basis for critiquing Benedict Anderson’s less penetrating treatment [of “the emergence of a distinctive nationalist ‘we’” (p. 21)]. “Whorf, Silverstein argues, demonstrated a concern for examining the fit between cultural and linguistic tropes of reality suggested by actual usage and any codable reality that might be behind such a project. Whorf demonstrated how ‘habitual thought’ emerged from the dialectic of linguistic and discursive practices, on the one hand, and phenomenal cultural experience on the other. But Anderson, in contrast to Whorf, ‘seems to mistake the dialectically-produced trope...for the reality, rather than seeing...[their] dialectical workings...[as] the facts to be characterized and explained’” (p. 22).

undeniable relationship. This relationship, moreover, lies principally—and we shall consider it here from this aspect only—in the inspiring breath which structural linguistic power infuses, in the act of transformation of the world, into ideas. (1971(1836), p. 22)

It appears that Humboldt is more concerned with power than with unity, since he links his quest for powerful linguistic structure with the nation by arguing that the nation precedes the individual: “As language in its intricacies is but an effect of the national linguistic sense, those problems concerning the complex structuring of languages (from which also stem their most important variables) cannot be solved adequately if one does not subscribe to this viewpoint” (p. 22).

In other words, from Humboldt’s perspective, there is only one way to solve problems concerning the complex structuring of languages: state force. He couches the bald assertion with ornate and flowery verbage:

Such is the nature of this infusion that it diffuses harmoniously through all parts of its dominion. If it may be deemed possible that a language originates in a nation exactly in this manner, as the word most meaningfully and intuitively evolves from the worldview, most purely representing it anew and molding itself in such a way as to penetrate every nuance of thought easily and unobtrusively, then this language must—so long as it maintains its vital principle at all—evoke the selfsame power trained in the same direction with equal success in every individual. (p. 22)

There are problems with Humboldt's logic.²³⁴ He describes the top-down "infusion" of linguistic structural power, wielded by the nation, as a painless process: diffusing harmoniously, evolving and penetrating easily, without intrusion; and also having an equilateral effect upon everyone (no exceptions). Both assertions are patently untrue. The selection and imposition of official languages over regional dialects and other non-national, non-official languages was and still is politically contentious two centuries later. Humboldt, were he able to debate the point, might retort that he is referring to the innate learning of linguistic structure along the lines championed by Noam Chomsky (1998) and Steven Pinker (1994). Yet, read in context, Humboldt is conflating fluency in a language with the enculturation of ideology by the state. This conflation persists in the multilingual ideology (and information policy, see the upcoming section *Spinning in the Discourse*) of the EU as well as in discourses about controlled multilingualism in the EP.²³⁵

²³⁴ "Already in Wilhelm von Humboldt (1988) there are strong resonances both with Locke (for instance, on the semiotic linkage of the linguistic sign with ideas [pp. 56-59]) and with Herder (for instance, on language and poetry as the expression of the spirit of a people [pp. 42-46, 60]), and mixed strains may be found in varying degrees...However, the core principles around which Locke's and Herder's respective language ideologies cohere contrast markedly in certain fundamental respects....Nevertheless it is important to take direct account of the correspondence between the language ideologies of Locke and Herder and their implications for linguistic theory and practice. We focus especially on the structures of inequality that we have found to occupy a significant place in these ideologies" (Bauman & Briggs, 2000, p. 196).

²³⁵ Bauman & Briggs (2000) describe how Locke's philosophy of language resonates with "the mechanical philosophy of the seventeenth century" (p. 145) and go on to critique "the profound impact [of Locke's *Essay*] on thinking about language during the following three centuries" (p. 149). They argue that "Locke...characterizes his *Essay*, a founding document of linguistic and semiotic inquiry, as an effort to make language and human understanding safe for science—and for society" (p. 147).

All humans do learn the grammar of at least one language (barring extreme isolation or massive cognitive impairment), but there is no way to guarantee a “selfsame” uniform effect of ideological persuasion. This is, however, the essential presumption of homolingualism. If the structure of language could enforce a singular ideology among all persons, then there would be no dissent, only patriotism. No democracy would be possible because there would be no basis for competition among political parties. To achieve the kind of “equal success” Humboldt appears to value, then humans must be denied the move from practical to discursive consciousness. Lacking the critical faculty necessary to reflect upon the action of language in the world, people would be stymied at the cognitive level of practical consciousness.

Alternatively, to achieve Humboldt’s encompassing dominion, something must be done or used to limit and domesticate which individuals plateau in practical consciousness and who will be encouraged to progress to discursive consciousness. Giddens’ (1979) distinction between a) the ability to use a language in practical, everyday communication and b) the ability to explain what language is and how language works, is possible because of the extent to which people are aware of choosing to use certain words at certain times in particular circumstances in order to achieve specific goals. The art of rhetoric is the application of discursive consciousness within the realm of practical communication. Humboldt continues:

The ingress of such a language, or of one closely approaching it, into the history of the world must establish an important era in the course of human development, and precisely in the area of its loftiest and most marvelous productions. Definite intellectual courses and a definite impetus, propelling the mind along such a path, cannot be conceived before such languages have originated. They therefore constitute a true point of inflection in the internal history of the human race. If they must

be regarded as the apex of linguistic structure, they are the initial stage of a soul-stirring culture rich in phantasy. (p. 22-23)

Was Humboldt arguing that such a pervasively-powerful language had not yet occurred?²³⁶

Is Humboldt's aim to survey the diversity of some of the world's languages in order to identify the structural mechanism relating language and intelligence for exploitation by the state? How can he hold lofty marvelous intellect in such veneration and yet seek to determine how to send the mind along "definite courses" with "definite impetus"? Bakhtin (1986) briefly contextualizes his mention of Humboldt's problem with his (Humboldt's) framing: "the premise and background of the problem—the unity of the human race" (p. 168). Bakhtin then narrows Humboldt's problem to "the sphere of languages and their formal structures (phonetic and grammatical)" (p. 168). Pointedly, Bakhtin adds: "But in the sphere of *speech* (within a single or any language) there arises the problem of one's own and another's word" (p. 168).²³⁷

Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote in German near the beginning of the 19th century. His attitudes are painfully ethnocentric. His work, however, is recognized as part of

²³⁶ Humboldt would not have championed English over German, but "Locke believes that the practices he promotes will further social as well as intellectual order: 'I shall imagine I have done some service to truth, peace, and learning if, by any enlargement on this subject, I can make men reflect on their own use of language' ([Epistle]III.v.6). It seems worthwhile to stress that 'language' here means English. Although gentlemen should learn Latin and scholars would be wise to study Greek, it is the ability to convey one's thoughts in English that really counts" (Bauman & Briggs, 2000, p. 164).

²³⁷ Heteroglossia may be the microsocial manifestation of the macrosocial phenomenon of plurilingualism.

a long tradition of thinking about language and society that emerges clearly in the writings of Vico, Herder, and von Humboldt, who argue that verbal art is a central dynamic force in shaping linguistic structure and study. Attention to poetics from Sapir, the Russian formalists, and members of the Prague school contributed to the development of performance and poetics in the 1970s and 1980s. (Bauman & Briggs, 1990, p. 59)

Although ostensibly concerned with the relation of the intellect and language, von Humboldt essentially established the ideological frame for linguistic diversity in Europe with the premise that language difference is a problem that can and should be solved. Bakhtin's rebuke is to refine the problem from formalized structures of language to the creative level of language use: the actual words uttered in the dynamic flux of social transactions.

7.2 Re-Setting the Problem

Donald A. Schön, known for his work in social systems theory, wrote about language and problem setting in social policy (1979/1993). "In order to dissolve the obviousness of diagnosis and prescription in the field of social policy, we need to become aware of, and to focus attention upon, the generative metaphors which underlie our problem-setting stories" (1993, p. 148). As we've seen, the original metaphor for interpreting is a notion of translation-as-transmission, the rapid transfer of information. This brings us to what Schön calls "frame awareness," which is "likely to bring us into sharper and more explicit confrontation with frame conflict" (p. 150). Schön's recommended response to frame conflict is

frame restructuring...constructing a new problem-setting story, one in which we attempt to integrate conflicting frames by including features and relations drawn from previous stories, yet without sacrificing internal coherence or the degree of simplicity required for action." (p. 152)

The task of this concluding chapter is to outline an alternative frame by shifting the problem from language diversity *per se* to social transactions among people cooperatively communicating using different languages.

First: to recap the situation. The stories represented in the discourse about SI in the EP are ambivalent. Expressions of criticism and dissatisfaction tend to target the interpreter or the interpretation *as if* a) language use is transparent, rendering misunderstandings as not normal, and b) speed is the best measure of effectiveness (combined with something called accuracy, but one apparently can't be accurate and slow, only accurate and fast). Rather than recognizing and working with the plurilingual reality, language diversity has been set up as if there should be a fix, rather than being a material condition inviting continuous mediation. The solutions are problematic: English as a lingua franca (ELF) is motivated by a homolingual impulse and creates a code or contact language that can exclude the interpreters (who are nonetheless still supposed to 'get it right') as well as other Members who have not learned the code.

Multilingual MEPs who tend to choose to speak 'directly' to those they can by codeswitching among the languages they know are also motivated by homolingualism. Like those choosing a lingua franca (English or otherwise), discounted is the 'indirect' communication with all the rest of their colleagues through simultaneous interpretation. In most of these cases, the verbal art of rhetoric is reduced to the most simple and basic. Ritualistically, each time this happens speed is reinforced as preferable to ensuring mutual understanding, strengthening the taboo of interacting to collaboratively determine meaning and continuing the interpersonal reduction of the interpreter to a component of a machine. The interaction taboo has at least two forms: Members are implicitly

discouraged from interacting with other Members whose languages they do not know, and Members are structurally prevented from interacting with the interpreters.

7.2.1 Frame Conflict in English

Following Schön's lead, Reddy (1993) argues that if improving communication is the goal:

It will not do to set out post-haste to 'solve the problem' of inadequate communication. The most pressing task is rather to start inquiring immediately about *how that problem presents itself to us*. For problem setting, not problem solving is the crucial process. What kind of stories do people tell about their acts of communication? When these acts go astray, how do they describe 'what is wrong and what needs fixing?' (p. 165)

Reddy's clarity is exceptional and his argument so particularly relevant to this context

that he bears quoting at length. Reddy presents evidence that

the stories English speakers tell about communication are largely determined by semantic structures of the language itself. This evidence suggests that English has a preferred framework for conceptualizing communication, and can bias thought processes toward this framework,

even though nothing more than common sense is necessary to devise a different, more accurate framework. (p. 165)²³⁸

Specifically, Reddy demonstrates that “as a meta-language, English...[is] its own worst enemy” (p. 166).

Reddy took the exact case of “What do speakers of English say when communication fails or goes away?” (p. 166) and found a dead metaphor. Dead metaphors are called dead because most people would not recognize them as a metaphor at all, because they are so ingrained in regular, every day talk. Dead metaphors are taken completely for granted as having a literal meaning instead of invoking, as they used to, a fresh, living metaphorical image.

7.2.1.1 The Conduit Metaphor

The dead metaphor that Reddy noticed involves “the figurative assertion that language *transfers* human thoughts and feelings” (1993, p. 167). He gives the logic of this framework the label of

²³⁸ Emirbayer, cited for his emphasis on transactions in order to conceptualize a relational sociology, mentions “One social theorist, Norbert Elias, [who] points out that substantialist thinking corresponds closely to grammatical patterns deeply ingrained in Western languages [such as English]... ‘Our languages are constructed in such a way that we can often only express constant movement or constant change in ways which imply that it has the character of an isolated object at rest, and then, almost as an afterthought, adding a verb which expresses the fact that the thing with this character is now changing. For example, standing by a river we see the perpetual flowing of the water. But to grasp it conceptually, and to communicate it to others, we do not think and say, “Look at the perpetual flowing of the water”; we say, “Look how fast the river is flowing.” We say, “The wind is blowing,” as if the wind were actually a thing at rest which, at a given point in time, begins to move and blow. We speak as if a wind could exist which did not blow. This reduction of processes to static conditions, which we shall call “process reduction” for short, appears self-explanatory to people who have grown up with such languages. (Elias 1978, pp. 111-112)” (Emirbayer, 1997, p. 281).

the conduit metaphor...[which leads] to the bizarre assertion that words have ‘insides’ and ‘outsides.’ After all, if thoughts can be ‘inserted’ [into words], there must be a space ‘inside’ wherein the meaning can reside . . . [or] perhaps, somehow, the listener has erred. In the framework of the conduit metaphor, the listener’s task is one of extraction. He must find the meaning ‘in the words’ and take it out of them. (p. 168)

Reddy’s point is that “the conduit metaphor is a real and powerful semantic structure in English” (p. 175): linguistically, it is a *semantic pathology*.²³⁹ The conduit metaphor contrasts starkly with what he calls the toolmaker’s paradigm:

In terms of the conduit metaphor, what requires explanation is failure to communicate. Success appears to be automatic. But if we think in terms of the toolmaker’s paradigm, our expectation is precisely the opposite. Partial miscommunication, or divergence of readings from a single text, are not aberrations. They are tendencies inherent in the system, which can only be counteracted by continuous effort and large amounts of verbal interaction. In this view, things will naturally be scattered, unless we expend the energy to gather them. They are not, as the conduit metaphor would have it, naturally gathered, with a frightening population of wrong-headed fools working to scatter them. (p. 175).

The homolingual impulse may be a kind of collective ‘gathering’ reaction to the complexity of pluralingualistic discourses. Pluralingualism, like heteroglossia, can be said to characterize all discourse, with discourse defined as language-in-use (Blommaert, 2004).

If so, the spontaneous emergence of English as a lingua franca (ELF) among Members of the newly-expanded European Parliament could be understood as an effort to use linguistic resources in order to establish more (or a specific kind of) social order. This may be only marginally different than, say, the emergence of Nicaraguan Sign Language

²³⁹ A definition of semantic pathology, and more of Reddy’s explanation of the conduit metaphor as a specifically English language problem, is included in Appendix F.

among school-aged children brought together for the first time from around their country in the 1970s (Kegl, Senghas & Coppola, 1999). Despite being exposed to numerous adult role models using American Sign Language, ASL was not suited to the culture or environment that shaped their lives in Nicaragua. Researchers watched in astonishment as these children literally created their own language while transacting among themselves. The salient difference in these two cases is between children engaging exclusively with practical consciousness and adult MEPs transacting with a mix of practical and discursive consciousness.

7.2.1.2 Members on “Words” and “Meaning” in the Discourse about SI in the EP

One MEP’s Assistant was emphatic: “We are often wasting time...a vicious circle...it’s a trade-off of national identity for expressing yourself in a way that you consider best. We need to give a clearer message, now” (F01/NM17). Another MEP’s Assistant was equally insistent: “He always reads the speeches, one minute. He never speaks freely. To give as much content as possible” (F17/NM41). The sense of urgency, of wasting time, of needing speed and therefore packing as much content as possible into a one-minute speech, guarantee exclusionary, homolingual effects such as interpreter mis-renderings and the ideological naturalization of the (dead) conduit metaphor. Other Members refer to “the” meaning: “We have concern with the sharpness and rightness of the interpretation as far as the meaning is concerned” (OM06). And perhaps the ultimate dead conduit metaphor question: “How do you translate [sic] a word that doesn’t exist in other languages?” (OM35)

Members distinguish between interacting during the debates and defining the terminology that will be written into law. For instance, the need for “precision is more in legal writing. English is easier in dialogue to convey points, using various words” (NM24). ‘To convey’ is explicitly a (dead) conduit expression. Interpreters are explicitly evaluated in (dead) conduit metaphor terms: “Sometimes...we have interpreters who are able to interpret not exactly word-for-word but the spirit—the central part of *the message*” (emphasis added, OM35). “In the beginning,” says another Member speaking about ELF, “I didn’t know the dossiers. I understood the translation [sic] but had trouble to pick out and sense *the meaning*” (emphasis added, OM62). According to the dead conduit metaphor, ‘the message’ and ‘the meaning’ are like material objects: linguistic packages being moved, without transformation, through space. According to non-living logic, these packages simply need to be plucked out of the air and properly opened at the other end of the pipeline.

7.2.1.3 Semantic Pathology and Social Policy

Musing about the social implications of the pervasive semantic pathology of the (dead) conduit metaphor, “a case that involved more words than any pathology I had ever heard of” (1993, p. 180), Reddy wondered what does this “matter...to the man [sic] on the street, to mass culture, to federal policy?” (p. 185). What is the “practical impact” of “the English language [having] a less than accurate idea of its own workings, and...the power to bias thought processes in the direction of [the conduit] model?” (p. 185)

Although it is surely unfair to lay the whole blame on English and the dead conduit metaphor, I wonder how much English contributes to the confusion in the European Parliament regarding the distinction between multilingualism and

pluralism. Understanding the term, multilingualism, as a signal rather than a meaning allows us to examine the code to which this signal belongs and interpret it, nonrandomly, among pre-established sets of alternatives.²⁴⁰ The discourse about SI in the EP shows a strong correlation between multilingualism and language learning which, combined with the popularity of EFL, indexes a preferential bias for homolingualism: use of the word *multilingualism* signals *homolingualism*. The social order that is reproduced by any move to a common language is a classic hierarchy. Not only does it make sense that the vast European populace does not identify with controlled multilingualism in the EP as a basis of commonality, incessant homolingualism reflects entrapment in the ideology of speed with its accompanying belief that controlling information is the best or only way to achieve and maintain power.

Language use achieves such effects on social organization because of the way it orients us to the dimension of time. As described previously, communication has both spatial and temporal dimensions (e.g., Carey, 1992). The spatial aspect of communication is most evident in the use of information for power and control, while the temporal aspect of communication is most evident in the repetition of rituals and the regeneration of culture. The ritual and cultural elements combine with the information and power elements to generate social identifications and intercultural relations. It is the transactional, social quality of language use that leads Members to say things like, “Language is to the highest extent the core of culture” (OM08) and, “Our language will never fly from our borders” (OM54).

²⁴⁰ This jargon is from the (1949) Mathematical Theory of Communication developed by Claude E. Shannon and later popularized by Shannon and Warren Weaver. See Appendix F.

Perhaps the core feature articulating the intersection of language and culture is, as Blommaert explains,

an elementary semiotic principle . . . the ‘double arrow of indexicality’, the fact that every sign [each word, symbol, behavior and/or collection of these] presupposes things and entails things when it is used (Silverstein 2006). We select [a sign] because of the presuppositions it conventionally carries, and addressees understand it on the basis of the entailments it triggers. It is at once a repository of past meanings, and a vehicle for future meanings. This is not rocket science, but the impact of this simple semiotic statement is quite significant. If we broaden the statement somewhat, we see that a sign always contains three analytical dimensions: one towards its past, another one towards its future. The third one, in between both . . . is the present, characterized by the sign’s non-random emplacement. (2012, p. 53)

Aggregations of indexicality in discourse generate what Bakhtin (1981) calls a chronotope. Literally, a chronotope is a timespace: they can be thought of as timescapes that are socially constructed through uses of language, influencing the ways we organize ourselves in space (and are ourselves then organized by space and time). The ideology of speed that justifies the homolingual orientation of MEPs within their plurilingual environment is repeated (ritualized) to such an extent that it evokes and animates the postmodern condition of timespace compression (Harvey, 1990)²⁴¹ in the social transactions and institutionalizing culture of the European Parliament.

²⁴¹ Harvey’s complicated argument involves the way capitalism has utilized technology to collapse time and space so that distance and duration become less meaningful as dimensions of every day life. Key features involve acceleration of production and consumption, especially of “accelerating turnover time and the rapid write-off of traditional and historically acquired values” (1989, p. 291). A result of the postmodern condition is “the loss of a sense of the future except and insofar as the future can be discounted into the present” (p. 291).

7.2.1.4 Calibration and Chronotope Variation

Bakhtin scholar Michael Holquist elaborates: “Chronotopes provide the clock and the map we employ to orient our identity in the flux of existence” (2009, p. 10). What Bakhtin had realized in analyzing ancient and Renaissance literature is that a careful reader could discern the conception of time characteristic of that era through the authors’ use of language. In “Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel” (1981), Bakhtin contrasts “adventure time” (Greek and Roman, circa 100-300 A.D.) with “folkloric time” (particularly in reference to books by French friar and physician Francois Rabelais, the first one of which was published in 1532). Both of these chronotopes stand in stark contrast to our own, even though each remains evident in popular and literary culture. Other contemporary examples of chronotopic calibrations that are alternative to, and contest, timespace compression are available.

7.2.1.4.1 Contemporary Chronotopes: Two Examples

In *Wisdom Sits in Places* (1996), Basso writes of a horrifying moment in his fieldwork with the Western Apache, when he fears having jeopardized his entire research project because of “my actions, which were wholly unwitting but patently offensive” (p. 10). Keith Basso’s guide and teacher, Charles Henry, an Apache historian, has identified a problem with Keith’s mis-pronunciation of a particular Apache place-name. Charles brings this matter to Keith’s attention. Keith does not immediately recognize the depth of its significance. After his fourth failure to repeat the name correctly, Keith tries to close the episode by relying on the audio-recording: “I’ll work on it later, it’s in the machine. It doesn’t matter” (p. 10).

It does matter, Charles insists, first in English and then in an explanation to another Apache member of the research team, Morley Cromwell. Morley's main function was as an interpreter. Keith's knowledge of Apache and Charles' knowledge of English enables some (homolingual) communication between them, but neither is fully fluent in the other's language. In the text, Basso provides a (written) English record of Morley's (spoken) interpretation of Charles' explanation in Apache. Then Basso explains:

Charles's admonition, which Morley proceeds to translate [sic] without dulling its critical edge, leaves me unsettled and silent. That Charles has taken me for someone in a hurry comes as a surprise. Neither had I foreseen that my failure to pronounce the stubborn Apache place-name would be interpreted by him as displaying a lack of respect. And never had I suspected that using Apache place-names might be heard by those who use them as repeating verbatim—actually quoting—the speech of their early ancestors. (p. 10)

The integrity of Charles's admonition is maintained by Morley in the transformation from Apache to English. Morley does not mistake Charles' point of criticism through either misunderstanding or misrepresentation. The quality of Morley's work as a cultural interpreter is praised by Basso's expressed appreciation.

There are layers to the communication issue between Keith and Charles. Each language has different coordinates for determining the meaningfulness of everything that is said. To apply the analogy of information theory, each language has different sets of alternatives from which to make a nonrandom selection (this jargon is explained in Appendix F). In this case, Keith eventually comes to learn the significance of *quoting* place-names rather than simply saying them. It is unclear from the anecdote whether the realization comes in the immediate interaction, or as the result of longer-term exposure to the meaningful coordinates of Western Apache cultural life.

As an ethnographer, Basso is attuned to noticing the indicators of difference. He recognizes that when difference is present, more effort is required and transformation of the usual set of alternatives for decoding signals may become necessary: that is, he is using a version of Reddy's toolmaker paradigm. Basso's use of the label, interpreting, in this situation is technically correct. The criticism he receives is pointed: Keith Basso is moving too fast. Keith is perceived as impatient or for some other reason unwilling to remain involved in the social transaction until he has oriented himself properly to both the landscape and Charlie and Morley's ancestors through the culturally-correct use of language. Basso explicitly identifies this Apache use of language as a chronotope that constitutes the temporal backdrop for cultural existence.

Another example of chronotopic calibration comes from the Xavante of Brazil.

Laura Graham (1995) writes in her cultural ethnography, *Performing Dreams*:

Warā [men's council] discourse is formally represented so as *not* to be construed as the product of individual speakers. Rather than evincing a set of one-to-one correspondences between *individual* speakers and discourse, *warā* discursive practice represents discourse as a collage of multiple, articulating voices. It pragmatically illustrates the emergent intersubjectivity inherent in any discursive interaction. In the Xavante model, truth is not a universal standard against which individual statements are measured; truth can be contested, for it is constructed from many voices. (p. 142)

By orienting to timespace in a creative and co-constituting way, Xavante maintain language uses and cultural practices that enable collective decision-making that balances the maintenance of internal cultural tradition with adaptation to new intercultural contingencies.

Graham's (1995) study of dream interpretation and performance among the Xavante details a comprehensive process of reality co-construction. Rather than

positioning Warodi (the dreamer) as possessor, defender, and sole interpreter of his dreams, Warodi shares his dream-songs only as a first step in producing community knowledge. While listening to his account during men's council, the *warā*, other elders add their own voices, singing and making other contributions to the telling: refining and rehearsing the upcoming collective, public performance. At each step in the process all participants enact the collaborative construction of meaning and cultural identification that the ultimate performance is intended to model for the community as a whole.

Even though Xavante conceptualize a dream to be the experience of an individual self—Warodi was the one who initially “experienced” the dream—its telling nevertheless [becomes] a cooperative endeavour...By collaborating in the telling, the participants altered the nature of Warodi's dream experience beyond what their collective singing had already accomplished. As participants in the telling, the elders transformed *more* of Warodi's dream (or what was represented as a dream) into collective experience...Moreover, in their telling the elders were actually *doing* what Warodi was proposing...demonstrat[ing] the way for the Xavante to remain forever. (p. 167-168)

Graham makes note of the polyvocal mode of these collective constructions of wisdom.

By formally representing discourse production as a collaborative rather than an individual endeavour—a hybridization of voices—*warā* discursive practice pragmatically embodies a conception of language and speech acts that was articulated by Soviet theorists such as Bakhtin, Vološinov, and Vygotsky and...emerging in recent critiques of speech act theory. (p. 166-167)

This is not the homolingualism of a presumed superior or prior set of alternatives from which nonrandom selections can be made, but a coordinated effort to draw plurilingually upon the collective intelligence and insight of the entire community.

Considered as a communication strategy, the cultural practice of sharing dreams is a powerful discursive tool for maintaining the integrity of specific cultural identity.

Practically, performing dreams places the Xavante at the center of timespace by

calibrating the telling of dreams to position themselves as agents who successfully resolve environmental changes and overcome external political threats. Likewise, Basso's study of the Western Apache practice of "speaking in names" (1996), draws explicitly upon Bakhtin's notion of chronotope (p. 62). Basso quotes a definition from *The Dialogic Imagination* (Bakhtin, 1981) that highlights the linguistic fusion of time and space with particular points of geography. He explains the fundamental relationship with the land that forms the logical basis for Western Apache conceptions of self and culture: a relationship that they understand as mutual and co-constituting. The land *actively* communicates with and to Apaches (individually and collectively), especially through the voice of ancestors who gave names to places (particular and specific geographical spaces) that literally describe their appearance *at that time*. While environmental changes are evident at some places that no longer appear as they once did (for instance, the absence of water where, at the time of naming, there was a spring), most places retain a similar geographical character. The place-names thus evoke the original stage for the telling of historical events that happened there while enabling recognition of changes wrought by circumstance.

Within specific social situations, especially those in which possibilities for public criticism and embarrassment are rife, very particular cultural considerations for speaking are invoked by Western Apaches. Under these delicate interpersonal conditions, a place-name (or several) may be uttered "to substitute for the narrative it anchors, 'standing up alone' ('o 'áá) as Apaches say, to symbolize the narrative as well as the knowledge it contains" (p. 89). Place-names are understood by Apaches as direct quotations of their

ancestors, and are coded with associated stories of historical events that occurred at the named place which embody lessons about what it means to be Apache. Basso explains:

In addition, place-names implicitly identify positions for *viewing* these locations: optimal vantage points, so to speak, from which the sites can be observed, clearly and unmistakably, just as their names depict them. To picture a site from its name, then, requires that one imagine it as if standing or sitting at a particular spot, and it is to these privileged positions, Apaches say, that the images evoked by the place-names cause them to travel in their minds.

Wherever the optimal vantage point for a named site may be located – east of the site or west, above it or below, near it or at some distance away – the vantage point is described as being ‘in front of’ (*bádnyú*) the site; and it is there, centuries ago, that ancestors of the Western Apache are believed to have stood when they gave the site its name. Accordingly... in positioning people’s minds to look ‘forward’ (*bidááh*) into space, a place-name also positions their minds to look ‘backward’ (*t’aazhi*) into time. (italics in original, p. 89)

This juxtaposition of past/present, of ‘looking’ from the ideal angle at a physical place, also positions Apache listeners to imagine their own situation ‘at the correct angle’ in terms of the values and beliefs of long-standing cultural identity. This simultaneous looking-forward and looking-back generated by such “travel in your mind” (p. 91) is a calibration to timespace that enables the evocation of past practice as guide for future action. It is precisely this kind of language use positioning that is at stake in the chronotope. The juncture of chronotopal positionality in interpersonal communication as well as in intercultural and institutional discourses generates conditions where understanding or misunderstanding can both be turned to a social good.

7.2.1.4.2 A Worst Case Instance

A “cholera chronotope” attached to place and timespace is analyzed in comprehensive detail by Charles Briggs and Clara Mantini-Briggs (2003, p. 277). Cholera and its attendant narratives cycled twice through the indigenous Warao community during the 1990s in Venezuela, leading to more than five hundred easily preventable deaths, particularly in Mariusa; a community nestled a fair distance into the Orinoco Delta. Premised in a blame-the-victim logic, the transactional talk of government officials, healthcare workers, journalists and clergy at every level of national and international organization shows an individual and collective calibration to an institutionalized, racializing discourse positioning the indigenous population as unclean, i.e. as *unsanitary citizens* (Briggs & Mantini-Briggs, 2003)²⁴² and therefore deserving (or at least at fault) for inviting the epidemic.

The seventh cholera pandemic, historicized in a discursive timestream by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization, is deemed to have originated in Peru by way of Europe and Asia before arriving at the eastern coast of Venezuela (Briggs & Briggs-Mantini, 2003). As a modern-day outbreak of a well-known and easily treatable disease, this pandemic “is situated within a master

²⁴² Briggs & Mantini-Briggs argue “that the key reason that authorities opted...for stop gap measures, information control, and rhetorics of blame was rooted in the way that spatializing, temporalizing, and racializing practices came together in institutional contexts. The result was to make a race (‘the *indigenas*’), a space (the delta), and a bacteria (*Vibrio cholera*) seem synonymous” (2003, p. 312). They continue, “Cholera continued to carry out the function in the late twentieth century that it served during much of the nineteenth—defining sanitary citizenship and identifying unsanitary subjects” (p. 319).

narrative that purports to track the ‘spread’ of cholera through vast stretches of time and space” (p. 277). It is the disease, not human beings, that is centered by this chronotope.

Chronotopes in WHO publications cast geographic regions and nation-states as natural units of disease transmission, surveillance, and containment. Texts, tables, and maps compare regions and countries in ways that create hierarchies of success and failure in combating cholera” (p. 283).

Many of the avoidable deaths occurred among the people of Mariusa, characterized as the endpoint of all river journeys leading into the Orinoco Delta, the heart of the Warao’s ancestral lands, still remote albeit colonized.

Mariusa, if understood analytically as a calibrating place-name, thus “serves as a limiting case of remoteness, primitivism, and cultural conservatism” (Briggs & Briggs-Mantini, 2003, p. 217). Warao resistance could not penetrate the pervasive chronotopal calibrating of official medicalizing, racializing, and blaming discourses: “Through the delta, ‘the Mariusans’ were branded as the human manifestation of cholera’s imagined ability to spring up at any point and spread across space” (p. 218). Tragically, these “imposed spatial and temporal projections...were far from neutral or politically inconsequential” (p. 284). Arrows on summary maps from the WHO during the pandemic “trace the ‘movement’ of cholera across vast stretches of time and space....These time-space connections were perhaps nowhere as naturalized and powerful as in reference to places of origin” (p. 277-278).

The Tortugans [Warao living in another town], on the other hand, never become identified with cholera, never become agents of transmission. The narrative casts them as innocent bystanders who had the misfortune to be on the path taken by the Mariusans.

Note that cholera, people, and culture follow the same path in this account, one that leads from Mariusa to Tortuga. The two places differ in terms of

time, in that Mariusa continues to be the locus of a previous way of life, at the same time that the premodern world coexists with its modern counterpart.²⁴³ They also differ in terms of space, such that one becomes the quintessence of the premodern world of forest gatherers while the other is cast as a more modern realm of agricultural production and sale. Mariusa and Tortuga are chronotopes—fusions of space and time—and the origin narratives that the Tortugans told about themselves and cholera are linear movements along this time-space continuum.²⁴⁴ The Tortugans claimed that they lived in, if you will, a different time-space zone, thereby creating a powerful sense of social distance from the Mariusans.²⁴⁵ (p. 189)

In what might be understood as horizontal violence, the Tortugans utilize a discursive escape from the institutionalized cholera chronotope, which contributes to the structural binding of the Mariusans within it. While cholera appears within the populations of both towns, the depersonalization imposed from without overwhelms a more comprehensive Warao chronotope; one group is sacrificed on behalf of the other. Time and space are identified in the institutional discourses and cultural communication practices recognized, studied, described, and critiqued in each of these settings. Graham, Basso, and Briggs & Mantini-Briggs are alert to Bakhtinian notions and deploy them where they make sense. Imagined as a continuum, Bakhtin poses two polarities of adventure time and folkloric time as examples of how *language fills time*, institutionalizing an imagined structuring of

²⁴³ Briggs & Briggs-Mantini (2003), footnote 5: “Dipesh Chakrabarty [2000] has argued that this notion of the simultaneous existence of worlds that belong to distinct temporal realms, modern and premodern, plays a key role in constituting modern schemes of social inequality” (p. 350).

²⁴⁴ Briggs & Briggs-Mantini (2003), footnote 6: “See Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*” (p. 350).

²⁴⁵ Briggs & Briggs-Mantini (2003), footnote 7: “Johannes Fabian [1983] refers to this mode of creating distance as the ‘denial of coevalness’ and suggests that it is the classic process whereby anthropologists have claimed distance from and superiority over the objects of their research, thereby contributing to colonial relations of power and domination” (p. 350).

timespace that leads to actual social co-constructions of reality. Language use is the means of calibration.

7.2.1.5 Loss: Subtlety, Nuance, Control

In the European Parliament, the discourse shows how the dead conduit metaphor calibrates the information-centric transmission model of communication, resulting in an elaborate transmission machine: an extension of the IBM system from the Nuremberg Trials. The rigid structure of controlled multilingualism in the European Parliament promotes the use of lingua francas, especially English, in order to avoid the exaggerated risks of interpretation. “I don’t know,” muses this Member, “if there are more problems with English. It seems not as much is lost as when I use German” (OM03). The notion that there is *something* there “*in*” the German, waiting to be lost, is conduit model (dead) thinking. It reflects the homolingual attitude that communication should occur without effort, and also a corollary: if effort is required, there must be something wrong.

As Reddy says, “In terms of the conduit metaphor, what requires explanation is failure to communicate. Success appears to be automatic” (1993, p. 175). The phatic qualities of presence desired by Members using ELF, or any lingua franca, are not absent from simultaneously-interpreted transaction *unless they are forced out by the structure of the system*. The different qualities of presence required for skillful and strategic participation in simultaneously-interpreted communication provide the basis for new calibrations to an alternative chronotope.

A fine-grained reading of the discourse shows Members are conflicted about disregarding the significance of interpreting. The nub of the contradiction becomes apparent in the discourse about words. One Member defined the choice of his own

language or ELF: “If it is something where the terminology is not so important, it is not an argument, and speed is not important, then I speak in Meridian” (OM66). These criteria do not seem to leave much opportunity to use anything other than English! But, as has already been indicated above and will be elaborated further, ELF is not a panacea, and may even be hiding consequential, adverse outcomes. A Member’s Assistant spoke frankly: “It’s always a problem when you have an English Rapporteur or Draftsman on a topic” (F37). “Listen carefully on the English,” warns another Member, “very carefully” (OM31). From the other side, in using ELF, “you can talk about complex issues with a high percent of understanding and then native speakers are at a disadvantage. Subtlety gets lost but no one notices except the native speakers” (NM28).

Putting something over on native English speakers during the spontaneous interaction of debate may appear, on the surface, to be a good thing, especially since English speakers are less prone to conform to the multilingual/language learning baseline. “It’s easy for me, my mother tongue is English, and all the interpretations that come to me are direct, not through *relay*. [Other language speakers] complain about time and the numbers of combinations: Portuguese to Romanian, there can’t be too many specialized in that” (OM44). However, as a non-native English-speaking Member observed, “There is a feeling that if you speak English here, you can get away with anything” (NM68). What can one get away with, I wondered. How and why? I observed an English-speaking Member explain the advantage to colleagues in a Political Group meeting: “One of the classic things about English is you can interpret it as you wish.” Recall the example regarding an international agreement for Israel to withdraw from the Occupied

Territories: in English, the specifics were indeterminate, but if the agreement had been written in French, there could have been no ambiguity.

A Member from the UK explained how leaving the English vague leads to very specific advantages when it comes time for implementation, because there is latitude to interpret the application of the law according to what is expedient at the present time, which may have changed since the past time period during which the legislation was negotiated and voted into law. An MEP recounts this experience:

The Second Reading was very difficult in Working Groups and Trialogues. On the First Reading the Parliament was nearly unanimous but the Commission rejected it. We could have put interpreters on everybody but everybody spoke English or partly French. We reached a political compromise—all in English. I was happy the Shadow's Assistant is a native English speaker, who warned about some words. You have to rely on the native English speakers on your own team. (OM09)

Which leaves one to wonder, what if you don't have a native English-speaking Member on your team?

7.2.1.5.1 Examples: Diction, Referent and Indexicality

“We have problems with the English language,” explained a Member's Assistant, because we are not native speakers, and when both are not native speakers it's very difficult to have a good communication about a Commission document, about amendments, and if you read some amendments it's sometimes only one word to change. And that's very difficult to have all the nuance in your own translation from Dutch to English and then from English to Spanish, Portuguese. (F37)

The word “translation” in this quote is accurate. There are two intercultural communication issues in the European Parliament: one involves the dynamics of social transaction using simultaneous interpretation, the exemplar of plurilingualism. The other involves the dynamics of translation: of securing a legal translation that has a chance of

complementary judicial interpretation across all twenty-seven countries of the European Union.

As it stands, (witness the asylum legislation wording about the provision of interpretation) much legislation in the European Union is written on the basis of how much previously-existing legal language can be imported from previously-worked out translations. The power of precedent is magnified by resisting efforts for better wordings whose ripple effect necessarily entails new translations and may invoke the spread of alternate cultural (and intercultural) norms. A truly plurilingual EU would have original laws drawn up in each of its languages, distributing the burden of finding equivalence equally, rather than privileging one linguistic frame.

A few of the challenging translation examples shared or observed during fieldwork include the French label for government-supported housing because “behind it is a logic for social organizing” (OM35), the notion of “cross-border” in Dutch, which generated “a big discussion, a very emotional discussion, because the word was not good translated into documents and not good translated by the interpretation” (F37), and the use of “illegal” or “irregular” in reference to asylum seekers who fail to meet standard official criteria or are otherwise of indeterminate status.

Another translation concern is the invention of new terms, such as “subsidiarity,” which is originally a Latin word, related to the Church in Greece and “completely artificial from the German point-of-view” (OM08); “employability,” which is “not in the French or German dictionary, it’s a British philosophy [about whether a person] can train for a job” (OM59); and “flexsecurity,” about which a Member scoffed: “What does that mean? Give people some but not too much social security after working” (OM59).

Another Member mentioned how the need for “parallel words” in all the official languages (NM70) comes up, just by working on a material problem such as asbestos abatement. There are “such specialized words...in fisheries, chemistry, finance” (OM35), and, too often, “the interpreters are not experts in the field; they use another word that is the normal word” (F17/M41) rather than the most precise technical jargon. In the analogy of mathematical information theory, the interpreters lack the “repertory members” (Reddy, 1993) in their pre-existing set of alternatives that could, nonrandomly, be fitted to the signal of a given technical term. (Note: the lack of pre-existing alternatives in a repertoire of already-matched concepts applies equally with interpreting ELF.) In another instance, a Member explains:

I didn't have any Meridian text in front of me, so I had to rely on the English...it was really on words...I was not aware that the Germans would turn up and come up with—they only read half of it, but the problem is afterwards...we had to fight from a technical point...what I learned is on language...I had tabled that amendment in English...and I should have tabled it in Meridian, because in Meridian I would have said..... ‘This was an extra argument’ ... not as an ‘excluding argument’...I read over that when I...drafted the English text, because my English is okay, but I'm not a native English speaker...this was a language problem...because the spirit of my amendment was certainly not to put it as an excluding condition...if I would have tabled that in Meridian, the services would have translated that into correct English or in the right spirit of English. (OM09)

The challenge, it seems, is to be able to use the interpreters in order to resolve conflicts regarding the words. But this is precisely what the structure of the regime of controlled multilingualism prevents, backed up the conduit/transmission model of interpreting and further reinforced by the ideology of speed.

If you know the subject—this is the point really in the Parliament—okay, I can't understand Romanian or Bulgarian or Greek, but I do speak French and German fluently. I can understand Italian, I can understand Spanish—

you can get the gist. What you lose in interpretation is... the words.
(OM63)

One Member asserted quite plainly that he would have been a better MEP if he had more interpreting. “Yes. I think yes because the work of our work is also about the nuance about legal things. We have to understand they are a sensitive question and one word could change the sense of the item. I think it’s very—it’s important. It’s important”
(NM73).

The issue, then, seems to be less along the lines of blaming ‘the machine’ for merely doing what it is ‘programmed’ to do, and more along the lines of how can Members cope with making the necessary communicative repairs?

7.2.1.5.2 Asylum

The Asylum dossier described in Chapter 4 includes a regulation on the provision of interpretation and translation for refugees seeking asylum in Europe. There are or “will be a lot of environmental refugees...and...many victims of traffickers” (A1)²⁴⁶ as well people fleeing war or political persecution. Many are economic refugees “just looking for a better life” (A1). Also, “there’s a lot of illegal immigration...coming from Africa, and [Malta is] ending up being the buffer zone and the filter of Europe” (A2). “Or for instance the Canary Islands have had massive influx some point maybe 20,000, 25,000, 30,000 people within a few months” (A3). Negotiations among five European Parliament Rapporteurs, their Assistants, and Secretariat officials representing different Political

²⁴⁶ As with the previous reporting of instances during fieldwork when I am quoting individuals heard in meetings but not interviewed; in this section I’ve used a different coding scheme for non-interviewed as well as interviewed subjects in an attempt to safeguard the confidentiality of research participants.

Groups were mainly focused on improving reception conditions and how best to enhance the influence of the Parliament in the Trialogues with the Council of Presidents (“the Council”) and the European Commission (“the Commission”). For the latter purpose, the issue of “solidarity” was key.

The lack of solidarity between Member States is actually causing a lot of problems because the Netherlands [for instance] can have a system up and running. They [an interior country] can, you know, have beautiful words on being tough on illegal migration and refugees to be welcomed. But if you’re faced with hundreds and hundreds of people coming in every day, it’s kind of difficult, you know, and you remain responsible just because you are, in fact, the external border because of your geographical position. (A1)

Solidarity was the main sticking point in the Trialogues, which focused on whether the “shared responsibility towards the external borders” (A1) would be *binding* (required) or *voluntary* (optional).

Another sticking point was on how to guarantee standards for the literal, physical reception conditions, as the Commission was “opposed to every and any use of the word *quality*” (A4).

This all sounds very basic, but [my first priority] is to make sure that the conditions people, be it illegal or not, but the conditions people are received in—this is not correct English, but whatever—that they are up to standards, you know, not A-plus, but, you know, just a bed and some food and a shower, you know. I mean this is what we talk about. (A1)

Given the essentially primitive state of reception conditions (at the time),

The asylum system is one which quite often gets by on sort of ad hoc interpretation because also there’s an issue about the numbers side of things there; you know, how many people do you have that speak this particular Afghan dialect who are not from the same tribe as the tribe you’re trying to get away from. (A4)

From the Parliament’s perspective, the opportunity of the Asylum dossier was twofold: to establish a new European Asylum Support Office as a focal point for solidarity and to use the recast of the preceding Directives to improve “the execution law, which is part at the end of the law” (A7). As summarized earlier, it was already conceded that improving the wording regarding the provision of interpreting would fail. “Within the Asylum dossier...the whole focus, [a particular MEP] doesn’t want it to be on this issue of language” (A5).

Nonetheless, amendments were made (review Table 10) regarding the provision of interpretation and the debate is representative (even to the level of metonymy) of the discourse about SI in the EP. Of particular interest is the fact that “we have been discussing [for] hours with Council on how to define language” (A1) and yet few seem able to recall the preferred wording, e.g., “I’m not 100% sure on the exact rule” (A5), and “...a definition where it is stated understands or presumed—what was it again?” (A1). One Trialogue participant recalled from memory: “May reasonably be presumed to understand” (A6); and another, “may reasonably presume to understand, that’s from a judicial point of view, you or legally you can at least be in line with court cases and so on” (A1).²⁴⁷

There is a switch between the subject and object in the grammar of the last two phrases indicating a subtle but significant difference. In the phrase, “may reasonably be presumed to understand,” the emphasis is on (in this case) the asylum seeker: “the

²⁴⁷ It is unclear what court cases this Member was referring to being in line with. In 2010 (one year after these conversational interviews), the Parliament and Council issued Directive 2010/64 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings. There are eleven references to understanding; the relevant paragraphs are quoted in Appendix D.

Other,” if you will. In the latter phrase, “may reasonably presume to understand,” the focus of the decision-making and responsibility has been shifted away from the Other, from the asylum seeker, to the person doing the presuming. In this framing, the legal protection is not on or for the asylum seeker, but rather for the official(s) administering the procedures. For the moment, just keep that nuance in mind. On the question of understanding: “There’s a sticking point,” as another participant explained, “a major one. We call it a key point, which means if a Political Group says something’s a key point, what that means is that that’s the point at which they wouldn’t compromise” (A6).

It was recognized that the wording in the original draft from the Commission was “rather weak—’supposed to understand” (A1), so it was proposed to “see what we did in a Return Procedure because I remember we had on-going discussions for I don’t know how long.” This Trialogue participant continues:

Then I went back to the Return Procedure and I saw the definition used, “understands or” et cetera. And then I phoned with the legal services of the Commission and they confirmed that if I would propose that specific definition, that that would improve the Commission text as much as oversight of the Commission not to follow the definition as already adopted in another instrument. (A1)

What is being sought is both the significance of precedent and also the oversight responsibility of the European Commission to ensure continuities in wording because

different definitions used throughout the instruments...is actually causing the major problem within the EU because every time we have an instrument linked to other instruments, we feel—this is not always the case—but we feel to have the same wording throughout the instruments thereby creating different treatment, thereby creating too much room to maneuver for Member States, creating too much room for all kinds of court cases. (A1)

Here is the relevant section from the (2008) Return Directive (emphasis added):

Member States shall provide, upon request, a written or oral translation [sic] of the main elements of decisions related to return, as referred to in paragraph 1, including information on the available legal remedies in a language the third-country national understands *or may reasonably be presumed to understand*. (European Parliament & Council of the EU)

Was the Commission intending to improve the wording by using “supposed” instead of “presumed,” or was it just a “bad translation” from French, as one of the Trialogue participants insisted?²⁴⁸ The initial draft of this legislation for a European Asylum Support Office was generated by the Commission, in keeping with Vuorikoski’s material, in which “a large part of the research material of [her] study is based on documents initiated or drafted by the Commission” (2004, p. 77). The distinction between *presumed* and *supposed* is subtle and, as a matter of differentiation, probably insignificant. Both involve making an admittedly subjective judgment. “Those who are more malicious about the issue are worried that asylum seekers get good translation [sic] and therefore make a stronger case and can stay.” (A6). This person continued:

There’s a spectrum of opinion there. I’m not suggesting everyone is in [this] case, but more disreputable people would be going for that option. But the main option with the thing is probably cost and resources to be fair to people who are voting for that. (A6)

²⁴⁸ “The European Commission consists of [now, 28] Members, known as Commissioners, who are appointed by agreement between the member governments. Throughout their term of office they must remain independent of the governments and the Council.... The role of the Commission is to uphold the common interests of the EU. It acts as the guardian of the Treaties, it serves as the executive arm of the Communities, it initiates Community policy, and it defends Community interests in the Council. The Commission is accountable to Parliament alone. (Noël 1993: 7 – 15...)... The Commission is always represented in the plenary session of the Parliament, being addressed by the speakers, and taking the floor when a document drafted by the Commission has been debated” (Vuorikoski, 2004, p. 76).

As noted, the Return Procedure “is clearly something else” (A1), that is, something other than the intake processing of persons seeking asylum that are being emphasized in all of the directives included within the Asylum dossier.

Of particular interest is the Procedures Directive, which is “the Directive that simply sets up a frame for the procedures to—for applying for asylum...the Procedures one is actually the frame for the whole—at the axis point somehow for the asylum seekers” (A3).

The reason why the Socialists were so intent on this particular amendment on language is because apparently there’s a ruling in The European Court of Justice which makes a reference to language and understanding; so that is why they believe that there is no legal basis for [the current wording].
(A5)²⁴⁹

“Basically, Geneva Convention and asylum law, and most legal opinion, suggests that an asylum seeker needs to have information in a language he or she understands” (A6).

7.2.1.5.2.1 International Law

The first appearance of interpreting in major international legislation appears to be in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which is a United Nations multilateral treaty dating from 1966 and in force since 1976. Article 14, Section 3 on the equality of persons before the law, states:

In the determination of any criminal charge against him, everyone shall be entitled to the following minimum guarantees, in full equality: (a) To be informed promptly and in detail in a language which he [sic] understands of the nature and cause of the charge against him; [and] (f) To have the

²⁴⁹ I was unable to track down any particular court ruling. Directive 2010/64 (European Parliament & EU Council) provides a legal basis for the right to interpretation for victims and defendants of suspected criminal behavior in the European Union. The question then becomes why asylum seekers are afforded a lesser legal right to understanding.

free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court. (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights)

The next appearance is specific to Europe, in the 1992 European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages. Article 9 on judicial authorities says, in reference to both civil and criminal proceedings: “at the request of one of the parties, shall conduct the proceedings in the regional or minority languages...if necessary by use of interpreters and translations.” In 1996, the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (also called the Barcelona Declaration) was adopted by the World Conference on Linguistic Rights but has not yet been approved by UNESCO. Article 20, Section 2 states: “Everyone has the right, in all cases, to be tried in a language which s/he understands and can speak and to obtain the services of an interpreter free of charge” (UNESCO).²⁵⁰

Returning to European context, the 1995 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities entered into effect in 1998; it includes three statements about communication access and language rights in Article 10:

- 1 The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use freely and without interference his or her minority language, in private and in public, orally and in writing.
- 2 In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if those persons so request and where such a request corresponds to a real need, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible, the conditions which would make it possible to use the minority language in relations between those persons and the administrative authorities.
- 3 The Parties undertake to guarantee the right of every person belonging to a national minority to be informed promptly, in a language which he or she

²⁵⁰ The Girona Manifesto (2011) reiterates support for the Barcelona Declaration by listing ten practical principles. None of these, however, emphasize the significance of simultaneous interpreting in live human social transaction.

understands, of the reasons for his or her arrest, and of the nature and cause of any accusation against him or her, and to defend himself or herself in this language, if necessary with the free assistance of an interpreter. (Council of Europe)

In every instance, what we see is *no modification* of “understanding.” Rather, as an EP Asylum Trialogue participant said, only “understands, full stop” (A1).

7.2.1.5.2.2 What’s In a Word?

In the case of the European Parliament’s debate about the Asylum dossier, there is apparent concern for layers of meaning associated with understanding. It seems a number of nonrandom alternatives could be matched (according to mathematical information theory), interpretively, with the wording for the Asylum Procedures Directive, including “presumed” or “supposed” (and even further refined by “reasonably”). The solution opted for during this debate (which continued until the Procedures Directive was adopted in 2013) was to copy phrasing previously established in the 2008 Return Directive:

“understands or *may reasonably be presumed* to understand” (emphasis added; see p. 399). Here is the (2013) Procedures Directive’s wording:

(25) In the interests of a correct recognition of those persons in need of protection as refugees within the meaning of Article 1 of the Geneva Convention or as persons eligible for subsidiary protection, every applicant should have an effective access to procedures, the opportunity to cooperate and properly communicate with the competent authorities so as to present the relevant facts of his or her case and sufficient procedural guarantees to pursue his or her case throughout all stages of the procedure. Moreover, the procedure in which an application for international protection is examined should normally provide an applicant at least with: the right to stay pending a decision by the determining authority; access to the services of an interpreter for submitting his or her case if interviewed by the authorities; the opportunity to communicate with a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and with organisations providing advice or counselling to applicants for international protection; the right to appropriate notification of a decision

and of the reasons for that decision in fact and in law; the opportunity to consult a legal adviser or other counsellor; the right to be informed of his or her legal position at decisive moments in the course of the procedure, in a language which he or she understands or *is reasonably supposed* to understand; and, in the case of a negative decision, the right to an effective remedy before a court or a tribunal. (Emphasis added, European Parliament & Council of the EU)

What happened? Is this some political sleight of hand, a blatant breach of oversight, or did the only adjustment with the possibility of gaining enough support get lost in the noise of other issues?²⁵¹ Instead of repeating the language of the Return Directive precedent as MEPs indicated they would do, the original “rather weak” wording of the initial Commission’s draft has been kept, resulting in different wording in the two pieces of legislation: *presumed* has been replaced by *supposed*. One of the Trialogue participants mused at the time, regarding how some of the amendments were voted in the LIBE Committee, “either an alliance was planned in advance or just...how would I say...convergence of intentions, the Liberal Group (ALDE) and the Popular Group (EPP-ED) voted together. And when these two group join, they have a majority” (A8). That means these two Groups rejected an amendment without securing passage of an updated amendment to achieve the desired alignment in both legal instruments. The conservative majority succeeding in maintaining a lesser standard, but failed to obtain the legal consistency that was overtly sought.

²⁵¹ Perhaps the researcher, by drawing attention to a matter that Members believed was unresolvable, contributed to the ‘noise’? This may have led Members to react (probably unconsciously, if so) by deliberately dismissing giving attention to the matter. In keeping with Cumming’s (xxxx) theory of a “problematic moment,” the noise may have been a group level event indicating the presence of a dynamic with constitutive potential to change entrenched power relationships and allow a new story about the EP to emerge, with alternative (perhaps even pluralingual) bases of co-identification.

The Asylum recasts and proposal for a Support Office were being debated just months prior to elections. This was a “hot issue...*legal* migration, it’s *asylum*, it’s *procedure* rights” (A3):

parties tend to kind of—they get affected by these issues because they’re populous issues. For example, on TV today there’s the big issue about the asylum seekers, mainly Afghani asylum seekers in Kali, and now [the public is getting their] fill of stories about they’re going to come to [old Member country] and so on. (A6)

Was it just the timing of these “sensitive issues...[with] an extra political dimension” (A6)? In a certain literal, legal sense (and quite ironically from the researcher’s perspective), the major conservatively-moderate parties did defeat the alliance of smaller, left-leaning parties (Socialists, Greens, and GUE) and their argument that EU law on linguistic rights should be in sync with the body of international law on linguistic rights. But this victory comes at the expense of obscuring the unified command of the desired *homolingual* network of law.

This Trialogue participant explained the need for the “understanding *or*” caveat (instead of “understanding, full stop”):

It certainly doesn’t go all the way, but we feel that this is—this could be something that wins approval in Council. So we think the Commission’s proposal is inadequate. What we want to achieve is one step further, but the last step of the way is maybe one step to far...this is probably realistic to achieve; whereas a number of Member States already indicated they are not willing to go for the full-fledged option.... I think what they consider is that this is—this would disproportionately make the whole process so much more difficult that if there’s in any single dialect that the applicant understands while you could reasonably argue that most applicants would understand one of the main languages be it English, French, German or so forth, Spanish, Italian, whatever.

That if there is an inkling that the applicant actually *does* have some level of understanding of that language, it would be ludicrous to actually have

to provide an interpreter in every single language combination that would be foreseen. (A9)

Did you catch it? I think it is an instance of social metonymy: when the microsocial interaction is bound up one-and-the-same with the macrosocial interaction. Doesn't this sound like the EP's policy of providing interpreters for Members? *If there is an inkling of some level of understanding, it would be ludicrous to have to provide an interpreter for every Member's real need.*

7.2.1.5.2.3 Spinning in the Discourse

This may be an inconsequential tangent, but I am bewildered by the contradictions in comments of some of the Members of this Trialogue procedure, just as I found myself often being pulled (as if literally drawn against my will) into similar conversations revolving around the same themes no matter how diligently I tried to share insights as I had them. Sometimes I would 're-discover' an insight that I would recall having had before but completely forgotten. Especially the participants associated with the two large parties, the EPP (Popular) and ALDE (Liberals), I had to wonder: were they consistently and deliberately misrepresenting their position, not just to the other participants but also to me? How can switching the word *presumed* to *supposed* be considered "sort of progressive" (A9) when it flies in the face of the strategy of exact duplication?

What comes to me repeatedly as I review my fieldnotes and interview transcripts is that the participants themselves could not keep the wording clear, despite (some of them) having spent "two or three years of negotiations" (A8) on the Return Directive. For instance, one Trialogue participant thought the proposed amendment was to insert the word *reasonably*, which is present in both versions. Or maybe it was to take it out? Of

course no one had any of the exact texts in front of us while we spoke. “I should have taken the text with me” (A1). But there it is: “Normally we use a definition which is saying the person should understand or may reasonably presume to understand. That’s the definition we currently use” (A1). So again, I’m puzzled: how did *supposedly* remain in the draft and pass into the final version?

One reason is the pervasive logic of multilingualism with its hidden homolingual tendency (to assume everyone understands) as well as the interaction taboo (which interferes with attempts to confirm shared understanding). Figure 3 diagrams an analysis of institutional discourse about multilingualism triggered by the shocking defeat of the European Constitution. That defeat focused European Commissioner Barroso’s attention on the problem of communicating Europe. Calling for a *Period of Reflection*, Barroso stimulated a series of discursive contributions whose centripetal action is represented in Figure 3. The centering force of the dead conduit/transmission machine keeps policy mired: “ritual supporting homolingualism and the interaction taboo are pervasive in information and communication policy, which presumes language in merely a utilitarian tool for conveying information” (Kent, 2012c, p. 96-97). Specifically, “the problem of communicating Europe is exacerbated by the routine (ritualized) dismissal of the social interaction and identity implications” of language use (p. 98). One passage from the article elaborating the discursive relationships in Figure 3 bears quoting in full.



Figure 4. Centripetal Discourse of Multilingualism in EU Language Policy. Space constraints for the original article did not allow this figure to be printed in *The European Public Sphere: From Critical Thinking to Responsible Action* (Morganti & Bekemans, Eds., 2012).

The *Final Report* of the High Level Working Group on Multilingualism names the relationship among language, identity, and political power as “somewhat of a taboo subject” (2007: 21). Specifically, this interaction taboo regards articulating clearly “the tricky question of the situation of speakers of minority and extra-Europe languages” (Gazzola 2006: 398)...Calls to provide “suitable translation and interpretation services” (EC 2008: 5) to the specific groups who most need them are recent and not yet supported in durable ways. The *White Paper on Communication* claims “renewed attention is being paid to implement citizens’ right to communicate with the institutions in their own language” (2006: 8). This vertical communication still relies upon the transmission model of communicating information, and fails to provide for horizontal co-identification through ritualized processes of social [trans]action. (p. 101-102)

The machine model leaves interpretees to figure it for yourself. While there are reasons this is desirable, it is also not necessarily always realistic. It leads to the assumption that someone else will catch errors and make the necessary repair(s). This is a rationale both MEPs and interpreters give for not interrupting to clarify or remedy mistakes or misunderstandings recognized in the moment; the layers of redundancy in the legislative process are intended to filter out mistakes.²⁵²

Of course “the state of play” (A7) with the asylum dossier involved other salient issues (from the Members’ point-of-view) than the provision of interpretation to people

²⁵² Vuorikoski’s (2004) research hypotheses were essentially predicated on the assumption of shared knowledge: “From a theoretical point of view, with reference to the cognitive aspects of SI, it is assumed here that the interpreters’ performances are based on more or less the same set of background knowledge of the topic under discussion. This assumption is based on the fact that interpreters work for the EP on a regular basis, whereby they have acquired knowledge of the institutions and the substance of the issues under debate. They also study EU documents and terminology lists. Thus, the knowledge of the topic that interpreters share with the speakers, while not at the same level as that of the MEPs, can be expected to be at a considerably higher level than what is frequently the case when interpreters work for international conferences in the so- called ‘free market’ (i.e. outside the institutional context). Consequently, it is hypothesized that interpreters will not face problems comprehending the content of the speeches or the terms and concepts” (p. 156-157).

whose lives might totally and absolutely depend upon the outcome[□]. The argument for communication access was “lost” before it had begun, “specifically in the face of Council” (A5) but

the fact that the wording—’in a language that’ sense—didn’t even get adopted into Parliament; so in negotiations with the Council they’ve got no hope whatsoever, and they couldn’t even possibly try and negotiate with that because they don’t even have support for it in Parliament. (A5)

Besides playing to xenophobia, or trying to constrain cash flows, another reason why Members might themselves have gotten swirled up in an confusing and essentially *unsubstantial* debate about a word is because the system of SI in the EP is itself predicated upon presumed or and supposed understanding. “We all know,” says an Official, “that the important thing is to *get* the message; it’s not to—whether the language is perfect or not” (F11). Except for when it *matters* that the language is perfect (or not). “There are issues,” offered a Member, “about the level at which you’re doing it and the purpose for which you’re doing” (OM78)

7.2.1.5.3 Double Standards

Members accept the loss of subtlety and nuance in their own productions of English as a lingua franca, but criticize the interpreters for failure to detect subtlety and nuance. “Is it possible,” I asked one Member, “for interpreters to do well with subtlety and nuance if they don’t know the context as well as the Members?” “Very interesting,” is all he said in reply (OM33). The contradiction concerning diction shows up in two ways: the double standard for evaluating professional interpreters and the use of Assistants or officials with the Secretariats as informal interpreters.

Part of the problem about—and certainly in the English language—about recruiting highly-skilled interpreters is that people may be highly skilled in another language but they are not necessarily highly-skilled in English to be able to interpret that nuance into English: their own sort of grammatical and vocabulary skills in English are not good enough to do that. (OM78)

It is admitted that fluency in ELF is not a sufficient stand-in for fluency in English. The use of Assistants and Secretariat officials is also a mixed bag:

We spoil it because we have a lot of staff who are competent in more than one language and therefore people will sometimes rely on their personal assistant or—you know, I mean I've seen it—the Secretariat—you keep an eye on them; it's really not their job to be interpreting for a whole set of reasons....if they're interpreting for [an MEP] they're not doing their job as Secretariat. But you know, so people got sort of used to that and working with people that they know and—and again—so they don't necessarily want to bring in the more formal interpreting side of it. (OM78)

“Sometimes,” an Assistant explains, illustrating the point, there are “problems of technical topics during ...the Trialogue meetings, but then you have the assistance of the Secretariat so they can explain and help. It's a problem of interpretation then” (F37).

A particular example was raised by an official with a Secretariat explaining a situation where “we did interpretation,” going on to say, “but in that case...if you do like that, there was no language problem” (F38). That situation involved going “step by step, because [the Member] had a very radical position...*if* there was a way to negotiate something better, of course he would try.” This official continues:

But he was not the only one having interpretation limits....I was speaking of him because I know him, but for example the Socialists had a French Shadow Rapporteur on that file which spoke no English at all. At all. So there was somebody speaking only French and somebody speaking only Italian, more or less. I mean, well he speaks also some English. The French lady didn't speak a *single word* of English...so of course all meetings, all bilateral meetings [with her] were done among four people. That means [the MEP] and me, and the French lady and her

Assistant...we *managed*, let's say, to put through at least a part of our position. So there *was* a real debate, real negotiation; and it was not blocked by the linguistic...*difficulties*, I would say, in that case at least. (F38)

In that case, what occurred was social interpreting: interpreting by multilingual persons who were as concerned with the relationship and quality of connection among Members as with the information content, *per se*.

Some of the Assistants reflected on their experience as informal interpreters:

The thing is that I'm fluent in English and I can understand and express everything, but if there are negotiations or something, I'm always afraid I'll translate [sic?] something in a different meaning, because you always intend something when you use special words and special expressions, and I don't know these words and expressions in English. (F38)

Limits to informal interpreting by non-professionals are also reached when the transmission model infects the social construction of role. Another Assistant concurs, "I'm always afraid I'll interpret with the wrong meaning" (F33). And yet another Assistant admits, "It is much more relaxing, not to have to interpret. Sometimes your concentration lapses and you miss something. It's embarrassing to have to ask" (F29). That *asking* (especially by the interpreter) is the essence of social interpreting: rather than pretending to an automatic transparency of meaning, in social interpreting every participant (interpretees and interpreters) share responsibility for constructing meanings that are understood in common. Meanwhile, "people [Members] are comfortable with me [an Assistant] as an interpreter" (F33) and it is widely understood that Assistants' interpreting "[is] really important for the informal" (F33).

Two comments are worth making: one is that the kind of "interpreting" that Assistants are performing is akin to community-style interpreting such as professional

sign language interpreting that upholds Deaf cultural practices around holding time and ensuring mutual understanding (as performed by Deaf interpreters and evolved and schooled/ally interpreters). The goal in community interpreting, as defined from the minority language user's perspective, is to ensure understanding (e.g., Adam, Carty & Stone, 2011; Forestal, 2011, Kent, 2013; Stone 2009). This requires a different utilization of role space (Lee & Llewellyn-Jones, 2013) than blending into the machine or fading behind the glass as expected of conference interpreters. The Code of Conduct for community interpreting is no less professional than the ethical guidelines for conference interpreting (see Appendix B), but community interpreters intentionally and purposeful attend to the relational as well as the informational needs of the interpretees.

The language labor being performed by Members' Assistants is akin to the hidden work of bilingual and multilingual employees in multinational corporations. To understand this it is useful to look at some of the business management literature regarding language use in multinational corporations.

7.3 Language Brokers and Language Policy in Multinational Corporations

"Acknowledging the presence of different languages allows those individuals who speak different languages to move between different communication zones" but international business managers (and researchers of international organizations and international management) are not sure, really, how to deal with language brokers (van den Born & Peltokorpi, 2010, p. 107). Language brokers are multilingual employees who gain informal power by operating as language nodes (Marschan-Piekkari, Welch & Welch, 1999) within an institution. This informal power is individually beneficial (Du-Babcock & Babcock, 1996; San Antonio, 1987) but has been documented to have

adverse organizational effects. Harzing & Feely (2008), for instance, found that such brokers or “bridge individuals” (Harzing, Koster & Magner, 2010, p. 282)²⁵³ become situated to act “as information gatekeepers, filtering, delaying, and distorting the communication flow to their own advantage” (Harzing & Feely, 2008, p. 54). Described as “muddle along functionalism,” there are “numerous drawbacks” (Feely & Harzing, 2003, p. 46), including adverse consequences to multilingual employees, who may become “overwhelmed by the requests to translate company material and their language skills are not always appreciated by...colleagues” (Vaara et al., 2005, p. 341).

Using lingua francas has also proven to have a significant downside, including “disintegrating effects [...] particularly at organizational levels below top management” (Vaara et al, 2005, p. 330). Harzing and Feely go so far as to say that “reliance on a single language is fatally flawed” (2003, p. 43). For instance, constraining a company to only one standard language may ignore resources at its disposal due to the unique knowledge and experiences of employees (Dhir & Goke-Pariola, 2002). Other researchers, however, argue that language must be decoupled from culture and a lingua franca utilized as an overt mechanism of corporate control (Luo & Shenkar, 2006).

Regarding English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), the international management literature leans homolingually in support of Quirk’s (1990) concern with keeping a standard model for language. Quirk’s view is seen as “the deficit perspective” by Kachru (1990) because it assumes, homolingually, that native speaker English is ‘right’ or

²⁵³ “...bridge individuals, refers to individuals with specific language skills that act as bridges between employees without the necessary language skills...bridge individuals can be structural solutions implemented by the company or can grow out of informal solutions” (Harzing et al, 2010, p. 282).

‘correct’ by default (Jenkins 2006). Meanwhile, Quirk (1990) attacks the “liberation perspective” that he attributes to Kachru, who understands world Englishes in plurilingual terms as “enabling what had been periphery English users to ‘write back’ and rewrite the discourses of their Englishes” (Bolton, 2005).

Kachru’s liberation perspective also challenges the thesis of Robert Phillipson’s (1992) concept of linguistic imperialism in which English is accused of continuing to colonize the global population. ELF is also, however, reported as having “dysfunctional effects” (e.g., Piekkari & Tietze, 2008). Researchers are calling for increased attention to ELF, asking, “Why is it that ELF research does not really have any visibility in business communication?” (Louhiala-Salminen & Rogerson-Revell, 2010, p. 91) especially as multinational corporations continue to engage “the prevailing reality of English, with the largest number of speakers, in interactions which more often than not no native speakers participate” (Seidlhofer, 2009, p. 237). Jenkins argues that the prevalence of ELF is seen as evidence of empowerment rather than “passivity and exploitation” (2006, p. 165). Coming under the umbrella term of World Englishes, effects of “transformative agency” for learners of English as a second language (Jenkins, 2006, p. 168; Lantoff, 2000) are evident, including “the representation of their sociolinguistic reality far better than either British or American norms [for speaking/writing English] are able” (Jenkins 2006, p. 168).

Scholarship about languages in international business has been growing for the past two decades. Boutet (2001) describes how language increasingly constitutes both the process and product of work, and Steyaert, Ostendorp & Gabrois argue that researchers are engaging in an intellectual “process of linguascaping” (2010); they question whether

all of the ideas about language use being put forth by academics comport with empirical data. The neologism of a linguascope was coined by Steyaeart et al. as an extension of Appadurai's (1990) transnational anthropology.

Conceptually, "a linguascope refers to the discursive space in which an organization or any other actor frames and imagines how it can deal with its (de facto) multilingual composition" (Steyaeart et al., 2010, p. 277; see also Blommaert et al, 2005). The description and analysis of the discourse about SI in the EP is a representation of the linguascope of the European Parliament. Although not every single theme matches up, the parallels between the discourse about SI in the EP and the issues presented in the international management literature are strikingly congruent.

The most glaring similarity is that language *difference* is framed as a problem, e.g., "the faultlines of language" (Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio, 2011). Metonymically, *language itself* is conceived as problematic. Language is "a dividing factor" (van den Born & Peltokorpi, 2010, p. 112 citing Anderson & Rasmussen, 2004), a "barrier" (e.g., Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio, 2011, p. 289 citing Hedlund, 1986; Harzing & Feely, 2008, p. 47) and a "problem" (e.g., Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio, 2011, p. 293); Harzing & Feely, 2008, p. 52) that generates "coupled vicious cycles," "communication failures" and an "adversarial climate" (Harzing & Feely, 2008, p. 54). There are "negative effects of language diversity" (van den Born & Peltokorpi, 2010, p. 210 citing Frederickson et al, 2006). Luo & Shenkar blame "language barriers between the home and host country [as] part of the liability of foreignness" (2006, p. 321-322). Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio provide a summary: "Previous research broadly agrees that MNCs are multilingual

organizations in which language boundaries constitute important barriers to communication and knowledge sharing” (2011, p. 289).

Monolinguals (in particular) are presumed to “suffer from language handicaps” (Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio, 2011, p. 294), have a “linguistic handicap” (Ehrenreich, 2010, p. 412 citing Frederickson et al, 2007, p. 418) and experience “linguistic inadequacy” (Kunal, 2011, p. 122). Kingston reports “the frustration and exclusion experienced by English speakers when their French colleagues spoke among themselves in French” (1996, cited by Harzing & Feely, 2008, p. 50), while Brannen & Peterson (2009) describe a case in which only monolingual native English speakers experience communicative alienation. Concurrently there is a trend reported by Charles (2007) in which “native speakers of English are...occasionally causing considerable communicative trouble” (cited in Ehrenreich, 2010, p. 426). “English,” reports van den Born & Peltokorpi, “is identified to be far from being ‘neutral’ or ‘culture-less’” (2010, p. 106). All of these framings represent the communication ‘problem’ in (what we will properly call) *pluralilingual* organizations as an issue of languages, rather than a problem *of social/intercultural transaction among people who use* different languages. The ideology of speed is implicated by Harzing, Koster, & Magner: “language is an important barrier, slowing down and increasing the cost of decision-making” (2010, p. 279). Piekkari & Tietze even use the engineering metaphor of multilingualism as “noise” (2008, p. 267).

Among the most dastardly accusations against multilingualism (really *pluralilingualism*: the use of more than one language in the same timespace) are that “language skills are an essential element in the construction of international

confrontation, can lead to a construction of superiority and inferiority, and also reproduce post-colonial identities” (Vaara, et al., 2005, p. 596). For instance, “employees who operate in a foreign language are placed in disadvantageous positions compared to those who are able to express themselves in their mother tongue” (Piekkari et al, 2005, p. 341). Simultaneously, “the common corporate language may also be a challenge for those who are allowed to use their mother tongue, because they realize the danger of one-way communication” (Piekkari et al, 2005, p.341 citing Laine-Sveiby, 1991). This body of literature is aptly summed up as “a systematic analysis of the problems associated with language differences” (Harzing & Feely, 2008, p. 52).

The homolingual assumption of such a blatant language-as-problem ideology ought to be glaringly obvious. Conduit metaphor (dead) transmission thinking is present as well. For instance, organizational goals are often explicitly framed in terms of “information flows with a minimum loss of information” (van den Born & Peltokorpi, 2010, p. 110), and interpreters are supposed to mask evidence of misunderstandings so that tensions can “pass unnoticed” (Albl-Mikasa, 2010, p. 141). An anti-interpreting discourse runs through the literature almost as if in order to pre-emptively discredit it. Feely & Harzing list five specific reasons why using an interpreter “clearly injects a potential source of misunderstanding into the proceedings” (2003, p. 44). The reasons that justify blaming the interpreter are familiar: interpreters must understand the context, have specialized knowledge of complex subjects, be familiar with interpretees as individual members of their particular cultures (not stereotypes), and be able to represent each interpretee’s rhetorical voice.

In an unusual move, the fifth reason Feely & Harzing (2003) provide for why using simultaneous interpretation might ‘*inject* misunderstanding *into*’ the communication is the interpretees reluctance to share relevant background with the interpreters. This is a mix of engineering and conduit metaphors and points to the fundamentally *social* nature of ‘the problem.’ Generally, simultaneous interpretation is hidden within the realm of “invisible translation” (Piekkari & Tietze, 2008, p. 268 citing Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio, 2011), but the interesting move of putting at least some responsibility on the interpretees (and not just the interpreters) is that it points the way to “the heart of social interactions” (Piekkari & Welch, 2010, p. 468) by opening inquiry into “the interfaces or translation [sic] points between the languages used” (Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio, 2011, p. 294). Such a re-focusing allows a “look at the ‘positive’ or ‘facilitative’ aspects of identity and subjectivity construction related to language and communication policies” (Vaara et al., 2005, p. 621).

“Sensitively managed,” Harzing & Feely concede, “there is no reason why code switching should impair the relationship [among employees who speak different languages]” (2008, p. 55). Charles and Peikkari emphasize “that corporate training schemes should focus on the broad spectrum of international communication rather than on increasing a systematic knowledge of any one language” (2002, p. 9). But, selective recruitment of individuals with pre-existing multilingual skills is “inherently costly” and “does not eliminate the language barrier [sic], but merely shifts it down a level” (Feely & Harzing, 2003, p. 47). Possibilities of simultaneous interpretation are implicitly avoided.

The desire for homolingual communication permeates the linguascapes of multinational corporations just as it does the European Parliament. Some researchers

advocate a common corporate language in hopes of “reducing the need for translation [and/or interpretation] and potential for miscommunication” (van den Born & Peltokorpi, 2010), even though “communication difficulties stemming from a lingua franca are caused by limited language skills” (van den Born & Peltokorpi, 2010). Likewise, “communication problems are caused because of the difficulty of understanding different types of English used by non-native speakers or poor translations of written material (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002). Reddy’s (1993) toolmaker’s paradigm has not yet appeared in the international management literature to complicate the three translation [sic] models summarized by Janssens, Lambert, & Steyaert (2004): mechanistic, cultural, and political.

Although a mechanistic perspective on languages and communication is critiqued as “unrealistic...unproductive—perhaps even dangerous” (Barner-Rasmussen & Aarnio, 2011, p. 288), Shannon’s (1948) mathematical information theory can help us see how most of the research on languages in international management has deployed a limiting formula with a pre-determined code of matched sets of alternatives. Option: apply a social identity lens and (as a result) find inequality. Alternative: apply a homolingualist lens and find (as a result) trouble with diversity. “Unequal distribution of language skills across linguistic boundaries tends to increase language-based inter-group boundaries,” state van den Born & Peltokorpi (2010, p. 106 citing Luring, 2008 and Marschan-Piekkari et al, 1996b), as if no remediation exists.

Meanwhile, if “communication...is only possible via interpreters” (Ehrenreich, 2010, p. 421), discount that option, too.²⁵⁴ Homolingualism can manifest in all these ways and includes “the assumption that ‘one language fits all’ communication needs” (Piekkari & Tietze, 2010, p. 267). Homolingualism promotes taking understanding for granted, which plays out in “language [and language use being] taken for granted—not questioned, examined, used as a variable, or explained” (Louhaiala-Salminen & Rogerson-Revell, 2010, p. 91).

7.4 Simultaneity

The focus is simultaneity rather than working out the details of similarity.

Paul Amar

²⁵⁴ In a paper on organizational strategy, Luo and Shenkar (2006) argue that “coordination costs [for multinational corporate enterprise (MNEs)] are reduced directly as a result of lower translation requirements and indirectly via minimization of the misinterpretations associated with linguistic barriers” (p. 324). They admit, however, “while we have discussed linguistic differences, we did not attempt to measure such differences” (p. 336), nor did they “elaborate on institutional variables that may influence the dynamics of language choice and their effectiveness” (p. 336). They further suggest: “While MNEs with global strategies are likely to use a uniform language, the pressure to do so might be lower when the languages used in diverse locations are less dissimilar (e.g., French and Italian). In contrast, languages from different families (e.g., English and Chinese) involve fundamentally different discourse forms, which might *undermine understanding even when an interpreter is used*, and thus create much greater challenge for an MNE that needs to transcend national boundaries” (emphasis added, p. 336). There are (at least) three, inter-related assumptions: one is the unquestioned tactic that differences which exceed interpretation can—and should—be avoided and ignored; second is the untested belief that shifting the burden and costs onto individuals for language learning is both directly *and indirectly* more cost effective for the MNE; and third is assuming that the *short-term* homogeneity of forced shared language use offers greater controls to the organization than *long term* adaptation to incorporating interpretation in order to preserve differences, which, if valued through highlighting and engagement, can foster innovation and creativity.

To take languages and language use as a plurilingual variable in the social organization of institutional and cultural life is a way to address the simultaneity effects of simultaneous interpretation and social transaction in terms of shared identity. “Differences,” writes Evangelina Holvino, “and the identities constructed based on them are interdependent and always interacting” (2006, p. 2). Her work²⁵⁵ addresses a manifestation of what I have called an interaction taboo, specifically that there “is little evidence that the importance of these intersections is acknowledged” (2010, p. 249). The intersectionality of difference and identity is made visible by the presence and use of simultaneous interpreters in the European Parliament. The discourse about SI in the EP, however, evades proactive engagement with the simultaneity of plurilingualism through its normative preference for homolingualism. As a terministic screen (Burke, 1996), this echoes Holvino’s observation of the field of organization studies and managerial practice, that “the silence on these intersections is outstanding” despite a discourse of “managing diversity” (2010, p. 249).²⁵⁶

I will only note the similarities I can imagine between the administrative strategies of controlled multilingualism in the European democratic policy context and managing diversity in the international management context by surmising that both are motivated by, and therefore (aim to) regenerate, homolingualism. The essential insight of

²⁵⁵ Holvino’s express purpose is “to reconceptualize the intersections of race, gender and class as simultaneous processes of identity, institutional and social practice...bringing to a close the modern impulse to search for a meta-narrative that attempts to integrate race, gender and class (Sacks, 1989)” (2010, p. 249). That ‘modern impulse for integration’ is akin to homolingual desire.

²⁵⁶ Another relevant silence regards “the unreflexive use of English” and subsequent neglect of “language multiplicity” in the field of management and organization studies (Steyaert & Janssens, 2013).

Holvino's model of simultaneity is that "simplification is no longer an alternative" (2010, p. 262). The social field (Levitt & Schiller, 2004) of Members of the European Parliament is a "transtemporal and translocative space" (Tweed, 1999 cited in Levitt & Schiller, 2004). The European Parliament cannot be representative of Europe without pluralilingualism. Members are, of necessity, exposed to more than their own language. Increased discursive consciousness is called for by the urgency of the history we are all living now.

Holvino's recommended intervention is to begin telling "the hidden stories at the intersections," which are inherently "more complex stories" (2010, p. 263) than those that are usual and familiar. The most relevant hidden stories in the discourse about SI in the EP are those of the MEPs who do not know English or another lingua franca. *Non-dominant-language speaking Members of the European Parliament are the keepers and safeguard of difference in Europe.* While it may be considered a weakness of this research that few of their stories are included here, this analysis uses the accessible and available discourse to "[focus] on institutional practices, how they create power and material advantages and disadvantages for different groups and how these practices are reinforced by and relate to specific symbolic and discursive organizational processes" (p. 264).

Further, the emphasis on thinking in terms of time and history (Neustadt & May, 1986) is responsive to Holvino's call to "[articulate as] social practices, the relations between organizational processes and their broader social, material and historical contexts;" this is achieved in particular by "explicating how that context and history show up in every day practices" (2010, p. 265). The description and critical analysis of the

discourse of SI in the EP presents the possibility of a temporal zone and physical space that could be characterized by, and deliberately championed as, an institutional community of plurilingual practice (*cf* Wenger, 1998) based in “fundamental simultaneity” (Holvino, 2010, p. 250)

Such a fundamental simultaneity, achieved by plurilingual calibration, may provide a pivot for shifting the social field²⁵⁷ beyond the European Parliament to the European public sphere. The shift would entail changing from a “concept of society...that is...automatically equated with or confined by the boundaries of a single nation state” (Levitt & Schiller, p. 1004, 2004) to a new imaginary of a shared European identity based in simultaneous social transaction that retains intercultural difference *because* of language difference maintained in shared timespace rather than splintered through serial monolingualisms and homolingualisms. The plurilingual practices and performances of simultaneous interpretation could become an exemplar of what Levitt and Schiller call “simultaneous incorporation,” a both/and approach to transnationality rather than “the nation-state container view of society²⁵⁸ [which] does not capture, adequately or automatically, the complex interconnectedness of contemporary reality” (2004. p. 1006).

²⁵⁷ “Bourdieu used the concept of social field to call attention to the ways in which social relationships are structured by power. The boundaries of a field are fluid and the field itself is created by the participants who are joined in struggle for social position” (Levitt & Schiller, 2004, p. 1008).

²⁵⁸ Ulrich Beck (2000) says “‘the container view of society’ ... [composes] most of the sociology of the first age of modernity” (in Levitt & Schiller, 2004, p. 1007-1008). Notice the similarity of analogy between the container view of society and the conduit model of communication.

The challenge of Europeanization is “a fundamental problem of social theory—how to rethink society if we do not take national boundaries for granted” (Levitt & Schiller, p. 1005, 2004). One hurdle to overcome is methodological nationalism in policy making, that is, “the tendency to accept the nation-state and its boundaries as a given in social analysis” (p.1007). The insight of Europe’s multilingual/language learning policy is that homolingualism is archaic. The substantive issue of simultaneous incorporation requires comprehension of the placement of the European Parliament in the historical timestream of the people’s struggle for social justice.

Paul Amar, in a guest lecture at Hampshire College,²⁵⁹ describes “the return of the future” in the timeline of history after it was “proclaimed dead in the 1990s” and “revived as medieval history by George W. Bush’s War on Terror.” After the supposed death of history, the future again became a topic of public discourse arising from the simultaneous eruption of occupations in Tahrir Square, the Wisconsin State Assembly, and multiple Occupy movements (citing particularly the Occupation at the University of California). According to Amar, “The Future” re-enters history with the Arab Spring, with the uprising of “The People” as a social actor, and the role of The Social as an actor in history.

²⁵⁹ Paul Amar gave the 14th annual Eqbal Ahmad Lecture at Hampshire College (Amherst MA, United States) on March 8, 2012. Retrieved 25 March 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNbLc7pLUMc>

A coordinated engagement of public intellectuals²⁶⁰ to the previous global uprising against the US invasion of Iraq (15 February 2003) “triggered a widespread debate on the meaning of Europe in which intellectuals from practically every European country—including several from Eastern Europe—weighed in” (Kumar, 2008, p. 88). Paul Amar characterizes that anti-war protest as merely as a footnote because it failed: Iraq was still invaded. In “*The Question of European Identity: Europe in the American Mirror*,” Krishan Kumar critiques Habermas’ and Derrida’s “attempt to construct a European identity as against America” (p. 91), arguing for Europeans to “face fully and acknowledge the legacy we want to refuse” (p. 96).²⁶¹

Kumar quotes American Iris Marion Young: “Surely invoking a European identity inhibits tolerance within and solidarity with those far away...I fear Habermas may reinscribe the logic of the nation-state for Europe, rather than transcend it” (Young, 2005, p. 153; p. 156 in Kumar, 2008, p. 98). Kumar is critiquing an essential homolingualism: “They [Habermas and Derrida] look inward when they should be looking outwards” (p. 98). Kumar’s critique of a selective contrast [Europe vs. the US] premised in a temporary homolingualism [agreement there should not be an invasion]

²⁶⁰ Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida wrote an article that was published on May 31, 2003 in a leading French and German newspaper. Prior correspondence with other “well-known intellectuals, such as Umberto Eco, Adolf Muschg, Gianni Vattimo and Fernando Savater...[arranged that] on the same day...simultaneously appeared articles by these other authors, responding to it, in a number of leading newspapers in France, Italy, Spain and Switzerland” (Kumar, 2008, p. 88).

²⁶¹ Habermas and Derrida write of constructing a core European identity based on distinguishing between “the legacy we appropriate, and the one we want to refuse” (2005: 10)” (in Kumar, 2008, p. 96).

suggests there is sufficient discursive consciousness among Europe's intellectuals to propagate a *pluralingual* center as the ground for a common European identity.

7.4.1 Challenges of Plurilingual Transaction

Premised in homolingualism and codified by controlled multilingualism, the interaction taboo between Parliament Interpreters and the Members of the EP is rigid enough to result in an interpersonal reduction, dehumanizing the interpreter as an automatic decoder, an instrument assisting the tool of language in the mechanical reproduction of inequality. The structure of controlled multilingualism in the EP that divides the formal from the informal determines the linguistic interactions of Members.

An official with a Secretariat for one of the Political Groups describes how

the use of languages through negotiations depends on the Member...[Mr MEP, for instance] has never been very... *easy* with foreign languages. He understands and speaks English. He understands and speaks Spanish. But when you come to a technical level, when you need *legal* language of the language, then he has problems. So if he has to make a public speech in English, either he prepares it *or* he feels he's not able to express himself *fully*; thus either he has interpretation or he prefers not to take part *or* taking part but not to intervene. So of course this affects negotiation quite a lot...this is one of the most important [issues]...in your research from my point of view. Because it happened already a couple of times that we had Coordinators, for example, without translation. Usually they try to have translation. Sorry, interpretation. But it happened a couple of times and he was like not motivated to take part, because he knew he couldn't really—he could just say, 'I support a decision,' or 'I'm against a decision.' But he would have a hard time to explain why.

So interpretation comes up to be *extremely* important to—if you want to be able not to only say 'yes' or 'no,' but also to explain your position. So I would rather say it is the essence of the political action. Because if you can't express your reasons why you are making a political fight, well all the Parliamentary debate gets useless. Then it gets just to be a machine where nobody will change his mind and you have no chances to convince somebody else of your position. (F38)

Multilingualism has been turned, at least in the regime of controlled multilingualism governing the system of simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament during the 6th Parliamentary Term (2004-2009), into the reproduction of homolingualisms that inhibit voice.

7.4.1.1 How Would You Prefer to Lose Control?

When we're arguing about language, it's usually about something else.
Robert Lane Greene²⁶²

In the rooms and hemicycles of the European Parliament, Members literally turn the channel dial to listen to their language of preference. A Member borrowed that convenient metaphor to describe the codeswitching of multilingual colleagues: “You change language [he gestures turning a knob], switch languages during an intervention to be well understood by everybody, not to be mistranslated [sic]. It is a way of showing it’s very international.” (OM20) The homolingual assumption is at work; that unquestioned assumption of ‘being understood by everybody.’ Vuorikoski opened her research with this sentiment expressed by a Finnish Commissioner: ““If the topic is of a very general nature, I can speak Finnish. When dealing with issues that are technical and complicated, I prefer using a language such as English, which can be understood directly by everyone.’ (November 1, 2003)” (2004, p. 15). This untroubled assumption of ‘understanding’ is

²⁶² Overheard at the booksigning for *You Are What You Speak* (2011). Lane Greene was the keynote speaker for the 2012 Business Language Research and Teaching (BLRT) Conference of the United States’ Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBER). I used this quote in a Prezi on “Misunderstanding and Innovation: English as a Lingua Franca” which was a 2011 Award presentation at the conference and available online.

opposed to the purported risks and dangers of misinterpretation by Parliament's simultaneous interpreters. The homolingual choice of a lingua franca is justified by the rejection of difference, regardless of scale. By this logic, *different* understandings are equally as bad as misrepresentations; a missed understanding as egregious as an omission. It is a tight ideology.

Homolingual convergence as a language ideology is supported by the ideology of speed. Many of the informal meetings (where interpreters are not required by the rules, such as that of Coordinators),²⁶³ were explicitly created in order “to speed up the work” (F11). No matter the sacrifice of Members whose language profile requires interpretation. At the informal level, where the wording of law is crafted with attention to its translational power across cultures and countries, language difference in the intercultural social interaction is either erased or managed in ad hoc fashion. As a result, rather than considering the broader and more far-reaching *social* implications of articulation within the EU as well as between the EU and international law, (as, for instance, in the case of providing interpreting for asylum seekers), an impatience with diversity misses the clue that a conflict over word can provide.

²⁶³ In this case, “eight times over ten they provide interpretation...[in] LIBE meeting and plenary meetings he *always* have me [an Assistant or member of the Secretariat]. Committee meetings and plenary meetings, you *always* have interpretation; otherwise there's no meeting. It's a rule. While Coordinators, it's not really *any* worry that you need—that you have to have interpretation at Coordinator's level...[because] they can not just say—decide—anything. They decide as far as everybody agrees” (F11). This official said, at another point in the conversation: “Well, French is my first foreign language. So if I can negotiate in French, I'm *much* happier. Negotiating in English for me is a little bit *limitating*, too. so I can guess for somebody who just has a basic level, it must feel really [*laughter*] difficult” (F11).

In the asylum case, the point is not that “reasonably presumed” is better or worse than “reasonably supposed.” Instead, the clue in the confusion is the attempt to qualify what counts as understanding. That effort is problematic for all kinds of reasons, most germane being that comprehension, especially at the level of mutual understanding, is not a controllable substance. *Control* is constituted in *the rituals* not in the words. If the rituals accord respect to everyone, democracy and social justice become achievable.

The comparison between an asylum seeker to the European Union and an MEP fluent in only one European language may seem too far-fetched, but the dynamics of trying to achieve voice in a linguistically-imbalanced situation are similar. The consequences of failure to achieve voice in these disparate settings, however, cannot be compared. The point of this illustration is that it encapsulates the controversy about simultaneous interpretation. Members “break into English, because they don’t trust the interpreters to pick up the subtleties” (F04). Subtleties? According to the discourse, much of the political communication using a lingua franca is reduced to the level of a blunt object.

Let’s return to the analogy of mathematical information theory. If there is a misunderstanding at the simplified level of discourse, chances are high that either the code is damaged or there are not pre-existing matched sets of alternatives from which interpreters can make a nonrandom selection. In homolingual interpersonal communication, such instances are usually handled in a face-saving way. In the system of SI in the EP, if there is an identified problem with the interpretation, Members “don’t know if I can intervene” (OM06). Regarding non-simplified language, one Member shared his frustration about a particular instance: “I have a very specific point-of-view, to

get out of the standard view. Sometimes the concept, [the interpreters] don't understand it...if you use English...it will be understood" (OM33).

Without belaboring the inherent homolingualism, what some Members talked about was their desire to be innovative. They wanted to break through and away from established ways of thinking by proposing creative alternatives. They felt stymied by the interpreters rendering 'the same ol' party line.'²⁶⁴ This is where the ideology of speed impinges directly upon interpreter performance. The emphasis on speed and quick decision-making for instant closure, no less now than when SI was inaugurated with the IBM system at Nuremberg, pushes interpreters to snap decisions based on the pre-existing 'set of alternatives' within the repertoire associated with that particular language combination, as specific as possible to the speaking individual, their political party's standard ideology, or whatever else is clued in from the diction choices in the source text. These closure skills, as they are called within the profession, are the easiest measurement of interpreting aptitude.

When an interpreter is clued to another set of nonrandom alternatives for interpretation, the misunderstanding that arises is not the work of a wrong-headed fool (Reddy, 1993, p. 175) but the inevitable result of a system under too much time pressure (*cf* Vuorikoski, 2004). Reducing the quality of discourse in order to avoid errors is not the only remedy. While ELF is a viable strategy evidenced by its rapid growth and persistence; it does not resolve communication difference and it exacerbates homolingualism. Minimizing misunderstanding can be also be accomplished by adhering

²⁶⁴ The Members who shared egregious stories from their own experience usually went 'off the record,' therefore I can only provide general characterizations.

to the EP's indigenous argumentation genre (Vuorikoski, 2004), increasing clarity and using repetition, as well as by increasing skills at recognizing and repairing challenging communication dynamics when they occur, rather than allowing them to fester and ramify. Adopting the plurilingual strategy means re-evaluating the conditions of social transaction and accepting that what is most conducive to equitable simultaneously-interpreted communication are not the assumptions of homolingual communication.

For instance, the “laugh waves” (OM35) that accompany jokes when there is “a *relay* in English: whoever understood the original is the first wave, then the English is the second wave, and the third wave from the *relay*” (NM56). The result is “you can be three sentences along before the Greeks get the jokes” (OM44). One particular anecdote involved a situation involving a *relay* in which it was attributed that “the Germans got it last and laughed aloud. The debate had moved on to discuss the number of casualties in an armed conflict...[the laughter] was not appreciated” (OM08). Although clearly unfortunate, the timing of the laughter is relative: it happened when it happens, it is *what is*. The conundrum brings to mind Keith Basso's situation of being ‘too much in a hurry.’ Perhaps Basso as an individual could adapt more readily to the established temporal calibrations of western Apache culture than the Members can, as an organized group, adapt their collective, intercultural behavioral and attitudinal norms to generate a different orientation to plurilingual time.

If, for instance, “the Members know what each other's languages are” (F30), why does the conversation ‘move on’ when a *relay* is required? Why is it framed as “a problem [that] the *relay* ...is much slower, a full sentence behind” (OM28)? This questioning is what Schön describes as

the hermeneutic problem, the problem of the interpretation of texts in a very broad sense, the problem of literary criticism. The concern here is to understand the kinds of inferences by which such interpretations are made, the sorts of evidence pertinent to them, and the criteria by which they should be judged and tested. (1993, p. 138)

Why is the *relay* happening? What does it involve? In every instance, *relay* involves communication among the languages sometimes characterized as exotic, such as “Finnish to Dutch” and “Greek to Hungarian.” Even without *relay* sometimes there is a ripple effect. “I can tell a joke in English...[then] you go on and suddenly there are Lithuanians laughing up in the corner. You’d get a shock—’What are they laughing about?’” (OM44). Other times, as I observed during an AFET meeting, a joke was told (in English) but the laughter was confined to a particular section of Members, the periphery never laughed at all.

Another Member clarifies the issue with humor (emphasis added):

If somebody tells a joke, which is always dangerous in politics because it can be misunderstood, people laugh. Now the people who understand the first language, laugh spontaneously. It’s then translated, so five or ten seconds, other people start laughing. Sometimes with, say, a minority language, by which I mean one which is spoken by few people, the interpreter is actually interpreting from another interpreter. So you’re then getting a third wave of laughter, which is quite funny, but *it’s not really natural*. (OM63)

The assertion of nature, that the syncopated rhythm of interpreted interaction is not natural, is evidence of cultural hegemony (Gramsci, 1971; Hall, 1986). The benchmark of homolingual interaction is extended through illusion of what is/isn’t natural. Rather than being evaluated within its own conditions of production, simultaneously-interpreted social transaction is evaluated according to criteria for an altogether different kind of communication, that which is both monolingual and homolingual.

The linguascope of communication in the European Parliament is not homolingual: involves the use of other languages in the same space and at the same time. Multilingualism *as a language ideology* has prevented the generation of norms that are adaptive to the observed outcomes of pluralingual social transaction. The time tolerance of Members stretches beyond the spontaneous ripple, but reaches its (apparent) limit of shared social interaction in the instances of Meridian-to-Meridian interpretation and voting. Just as Members are reluctant or even resistant to using headphones to listen to their ‘exotic’ colleagues, they are also (apparently) willing to periodically sacrifice them: “If I see that I can communicate with English...if two or three don’t speak English I don’t mind” (NM21). The ultimate breakdown of the information transmission machine occurs during voting, when the ideology of speed exceeds the human capacity to communicate.

Even though, as an Official clarified, the system “was never intended to move to one language” (F32, the homolingual impulse combines with the ideology of speed: as a longterm EP official stated, the interpreting regime is “a trajectory we’ve followed. To alter it will be difficult” (F04). In addition to the homolingual impulse, there is what is understood about the nature of politics itself, which means, “sometimes compromises have to be made in private” (OM09).²⁶⁵ The desire for such “talks under four eyes: no interpreters needed” (OM03) plays right into homolingualist insider/outsider language lines. It also points to a deeper resentment: “From the moment there is a third person there, the atmosphere is changed” (OM09). *Isn’t that the point of a pluralingual democracy?* A Member recounts the situation of a colleague negotiating with the Council:

²⁶⁵ Some Members insist that everything important happens in meetings.

He don't speak English. But the others and we are not understanding Italian. So he has his interpreter with him...and he tells his interpreter what he wants to say...then there is a translation [sic]...then Council is answering. His interpreter translate [sic] the message, but then—that is a very bad position in negotiations, a very bad position. When you have no direct contact, when you cannot discuss directly vis-a-vis, then you are in a bad position. (OM67).

This prejudice against interpreted interaction is validated by reference to the homolingual situation. It is as if “your contact by eyes” and the ability to “see how is the relationship” (ON67) are eradicated by the language mediation of an interpreter: as if interpretees’ own perceptions no longer exist.

7.4.1.1.1 Relying on the Wrong Criteria: The Homolingual Illusion

It is difficult to participate with this person between us.
Old Member (OM) of the European Parliament

“Even with the best people [interpreting], there are still problems even though *you expect it should be smooth*” (emphasis added, OM03). Where does this expectation come from? The highest form of ‘smoothness’ is what Csikszentmihaly (1990) described as the psychological experience of “flow.”²⁶⁶ I am suggesting that when we are communicating homolingually, that is, with people who ‘speak the same language’ (be it a language such as the mother tongue or a disciplinary or ideological language, interpreted or not), we

²⁶⁶ As an optimal psychological state, Csikszentmihályi (1990) describes flow as completely absorbing, to the extent of immersion: “Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz” (Csikszentmihályi, quoted by Geirland, 1996). Based on the definition of flow as “a state of “intense emotional involvement” and timelessness that comes from immersive and challenging activities” (Grierland, 1996), an action learning hypothesis is that the experience of communicative flow is a reference point for cultivating chronotopic awareness.

experience a certain kind of flow that, put simply, feels good. Flow may be only the phatic communication function of sharing some basis of identification, but it also applies to being immersed in a task and unaware of the conditions enabling the task: fish in water; people in air.

I suspect that it is the desire to achieve or maintain that flow that motivates the resistance to interpretation, and the disappointment of losing flow contributes to the discourse theme of complaint about interpreter's purported mistakes and misunderstandings. "Don't think about it," urges this Official. "Try not to use them... interact directly, you can *act more quickly* and *gauge understanding*" (F04). The assumption that one cannot "gauge understanding" during simultaneous interpretation is false. In actuality, just as one example, "the evidence arises in debate when someone disagrees and I would not expect them to disagree—why?" (OM29). The ideology of speed motivates the desire for flow; if you cannot find any rationale for slowing down then you will continue to reject the alternate rhythms of pluralingual interpreting.

There are apparently many sanctions to compel Members to conform to the homolingual imperative: "In Parliament, if someone asks a question and you do not answer in their language, then they do not ask again" (NM26); and "it becomes difficult when language becomes an issue of nationalism or patriotism instead of a cultural value" (OM57). The multilingual homologic is celebrated: "In the cafe, you can listen and hear so many languages. It is very interesting. The communication is the tool, in such a case no one is concentrated on the language: it's the goals. And the necessity to be polite" (OM20). There may be a mild tyranny of politeness that also draws Members to provide that *inkling of understanding*; and there is disagreement on the extent to which (when and

whether) complete comprehension or fully fluent expression matters: “Listening is not the issue...[rather] to express every detail” (OM12). Or is it more true that “it is very seldom that one needs to make a precise point in one’s own language” (NM24)?

7.4.1.2 Authorizing Interpretation

*The problem is we have no contact with the interpreters.
There is no interpersonal.
I know some of them but it is sporadic and
no one is talking about this problem.*

New Member (NM) of the European Parliament

The negative and adverse consequences of the system of controlled multilingualism were perceived by the Parliament’s interpreters during the first chaotic year (2004-2005) of the big bang enlargement. Interpreters’ concerns composed “a discourse of danger and loss” (Kent, 2009) and foreshadowed everything the Members articulate in their discourse during the last year (2008-2009) after the big bang enlargement. The research periods coincide like bookends for the 6th Parliamentary term. The designed of controlled multilingualism structures an inability to intervene in the ideology of speed, driving Members to the homolingual option rather than cultivating the full pluralinguistic capacities of communication involving simultaneous interpretation.

An insightful Member commented, “The rhythm is fundamental” (OM33), but the pace of some aspects of Parliament’s language regime is faster than humanly possible. Several Members offered their political wisdom, to select a few issues for an entire term and follow them carefully all the way through. European Parliament Interpreters offer advice, too:

This is an environment where the illusion of being understood correctly easily gets created. For example, if you are in a meeting and have to say something, you'll probably be referring to a text that has been talked about in three, four, or five previous meetings, so everybody knows what you're talking about. That's a great advantage because even if you don't express yourself exactly, the listener knows what you're talking about and can fill in the gaps, so you get the illusion of being understood if you speak English. This is very dangerous because then you think that with your medium English, you get understood and you don't need all these interpreters...I even had my doubts, but the proof is they don't understand each other. You see it especially when there's a new topic. People who think their English is good have to speak in their mother tongue because they can't cope with speaking in English – the new terms, new reality they don't know. (EP Interpreter #12) (Kent, 2009, p. 67)

Familiar flows of connection and communication overlap and intersect with Members' topical interests and motivations, leading to affinity groupings based in a kind of attraction to what requires the least effort. (Which is not to imply Members are not working hard. Every Member I spoke with impressed me, including Members that did not self-select for inclusion in this research. I did not witness the stereotype of the Parliament as a dumping ground for politicians unwanted in the national scene.)

Regarding the provision of interpretation, from the first year of the big bang enlargement to the last, many Members agreed: "More and more often I use it" (NM53). Members consistently commented on the *increasing* quality and caliber of interpreters. Many Members want to use the system of SI in the EP passively, meaning they want to listen to the original language (if they know enough of it) whenever possible but speak in their own language and trust the interpreters' renditions. "For my MEP," explained one Assistant, "[speaking] English would be unusual. He wants to know exactly what he's saying; he trusts the interpreters so much more than he trusts his own English" (F15/NM18). Members who had experienced working with interpreters while traveling on Delegations were, in general, much less critical of the interpretation process. "I had an experience in China: it works" (OM42).

Relations are changed when interpreters go with Members somewhere else. It's an open secret: there are affairs. They work more closely together, physically, standing next to each other...' Did he understand?' You can query. (F28)

Fear of gossip and negative press should not deter the larger goal. The ability to interact *with* the interpreter, rather than treating them as an uncommunicable part of a machine, changes everything.

Members also warn each other about the consequences of language choices: "Our [Meridian] colleagues always speak [their] Meridian...and they told us [our] Meridian is important. 'Speak Meridian, otherwise we will lose our rights to speak [it]'" (OM67).

This Member continues:

All the people from [our Meridia] speak English...and I have seen what happens. In the Delegation of eight persons to the Slovakia, we have four people from Meridia. There were one or two from England, one from France, one from Germany, one from Austria. They had translation [sic]. We not. We were four, but not right to have translation [sic]...And you see that in the Parliament, we have no problems. But outside the Parliament on Delegations, then all the time we have to speak English. (OM67).

Another Member urges, "Look to [the] booth...you've got to understand who you're working with. The accuracy is what's important, not the speed" (OM44).

Historically, Delegations have played an important function in allowing Members and Interpreters to interact. Since 2010, the new service of *Ad Personam* interpretation should fulfil a similar function.

7.4.1.3 *Ad Personam* Interpretation

Why don't they publicize this?

Old Member (OM) of the European Parliament

The Member comments in this section are hopefully no longer representative of the situation in Parliament. In 2008-2009 *Ad Personam* was brand new, now it has been in use for all of the 7th Parliamentary term (2009-2014); the quality of access should be much greater than during the pilot.²⁶⁷ “At the moment,” a Member’s Assistant explained (during the 6th term), “there is not a good regulation to have an interpretation during a Shadow meeting, during a roundtable conference, during a discussion with some Members about amendments” (F37/M81). In 2008-2009, the *Ad Personam* program was just being piloted, initially with only five languages.²⁶⁸ See Appendix E for the rules and request form. Members that I talked with were “astonished to learn about personalized interpretation” (OM09) and found it “hard to give an answer [about whether it is worthwhile] because I have never used it” (NM02). Some MEPs, musing on why it had not been more widely taken advantage of during the pilot, suggested, “Maybe they don’t know *Ad Personam* is available” (OM58). Intriguingly, after one of the rare professionally-interpreted interviews that I was able to have with an MEP who did not speak English, the volunteer interpreter commented that, in such a direct interpersonal setting,²⁶⁹ “[the Member] does not know how to use an interpreter” (F39).

²⁶⁷ Appendix E is a copy of the bilingual request form (in French and English) for *Ad Personam* interpreting: it defines the eligible Member roles and request logistics (subject, location, languages requested, participants). Such information is characteristically requested for any community interpreting job. The only substantial difference between the *Ad Personam* request and a community interpreting request is the inclusion of a feedback form.

²⁶⁸ I was told by an Official (F23) that the most popular combination in the first year was Italian-English.

²⁶⁹ In this instance there were four people: the researcher, the interpreter, the MEP and the MEP’s primary Assistant.

In other words, the Member wanted to apply the same impersonal (dead) conduit model by ignoring the visible dynamics of interaction and focusing only on the language. Another Member's first reaction to the idea of using *Ad Personam* interpreting was that "it would be awkward with [only] five or six people" (OM42). Experiences of using their Assistant,²⁷⁰ an Official with one of the Secretariats, or a colleague as an informal interpreter, seemed to fly out of mind. However, in contrast with the impersonalization of the usual conference interpreting situation, with the interpreters removed "behind the glass,"²⁷¹ in dialogue interpreting (that is, community interpreting) all the resources of interpersonal communication are present.²⁷² The dynamics of presence and visibility interrupt the European Parliament's systemic illusion of homolingual communication. This immediacy is what characterizes community interpreting. The most cutting edge theory and practice has consistently come from the specialized sub-field of sign language interpretation (e.g. Mindess, 1999; Napier, 1979).

²⁷⁰ "It's quite funny that normally the people don't address me [an Assistant during ad hoc interpreting], because they know that I'm an interpreter and they'll look at him and they answer him, and they look at him even if I speak...they address him" (F38). Also: "I don't have the feeling that [my interpreting] disturbs conversation normally...[my MEP] can understand lots of the spoken words, he has just a problem to express English, but I think he understands quite well. And that makes it much more easier because you don't have to translate [sic] every word" (F38).

²⁷¹ "You never see them, only behind glass, in the booth. Their worlds and ours don't contact each other very much—we only negotiate with the Service of provision" (F04). (Evidence of the interaction taboo.)

²⁷² "Dialogue interpreting includes what is variously referred to in English as Community, Public Service, Liaison, Ad Hoc or Bilateral Interpreting—the defining characteristic being interpreter-mediated communication in spontaneous face-to-face interaction" (Mason, 1999, p. 147).

The humanized presence of an interpreter in sign language interpreting, whose performance includes monitoring the achievement of mutual understanding (Forestal, 2011; Stone, 2009) introduces the possibility of “real interpreting” (Turner, 2007) in which all participants “acknowledg[e] the *interdependence* of process, perceiver and product . . . [bringing a] sense of reflexivity, this necessarily *knowing* relationship, this interdependent relationship of *knowing* between the interpreter, the interpretees, the act of interpreting and that which is interpreted” (p. 189). Setting prejudice against signed languages aside,²⁷³ an exemplary model for social interpreting as a relational-cultural counterpart to balance out the information-and-control (dead) conduit model of SI in the EP already exists in sign language community interpreting.

By now, one hopes, many Members have had positive experiences with *Ad Personam* interpretation. The only Member I spoke with in 2009 who had personal experience with the program was delighted. “Just now,” the MEP explained,

I am [effective] for the project and I have all the conditions for my job and I have interpretation *ad personam* and he is very good because without it, it will be only formally and I—just now I am able to do this job in good effectiveness. (NM70)

Other Members readily grasped its potential:

I think that the idea of a personal interpreters is very, very good because if you have the—not non-formal, but formal discussion, for example, with deputies from Belgium Parliament,²⁷⁴ et cetera, it is possible to discuss on

²⁷³ I admit to being disheartened at the frequency of EP Interpreters, Members and other Officials saying something to the effect of, “I’m not used to thinking of that as interpreting” (F31), in regard to communication with Deaf persons involving a signed language.

²⁷⁴ Aside: The Flemish Parliament in Belgium has an elected Deaf Member, Helga Stevens, who is now serving her second consecutive term, 2004-2014. She is running for the European Parliament; elections are 25 May 2014.

the normal level of, you know, which we know English, for example, or French. But when in the case when it's discussion about, for example, agreement, a resolution, here I think must be professional interpreter. (NM63)

No doubt there are other stories, too, less successful accounts due to various factors. If there are more negative or critical stories than affirmative ones about the *Ad Personam* interpreting provision, I would question to what extent the conduit model metaphor predominates, and seek to identify the means by which interpreters are being authorized to ensure mutual understanding.

The discourse reported here establishes that “it can be tricky when there's no interpretation” (F07). The homolingual imperative may lead Members to feel that “it is embarrassing to ask just for me” (OM62), and of course, to request interpretation is “political” because “you've got to ask somebody for it” (OM63). The myth in the discourse about SI in the EP is that the choice of a lingua franca, be it ELF or another language shared by the interacting Members, is somehow *less* political. It is not. Rather, the homolingual option has consequences both in the immediate (perceived) achievement or failure to achieve voice, and in the long-term calibration toward a timespace that accords with Europe's pluralingual dream.

7.5 The Toolmaker's Paradigm

They were very aware that communicating was hard work. And their successes were extremely rewarding to them, because they retained a distinct sense of awe and wonder that they could make the system work at all. It was a daily miracle, which had improved their respective standards of living immensely.

Michael Reddy (1993, p. 185)

The transmission metaphor may have been what Schön calls a “generative metaphor” (1993) when the IBM system was invented at Nuremberg, but it turns out closely related to the (dead) conduit metaphor, with unintended consequences that invite critique and revision. Angelelli (2001) clearly states the main symptom of the problem: interpreters, as “powerful individuals [have] often have been portrayed as invisible and deprived of agency that is essential to their performance of very complex linguistic and information processing tasks” (p. 1). Thinking in terms of time, we can anticipate that, without intervention, the discourse about SI in the EP will continue to calibrate to homolingualism and the ideology of speed.

In Reddy’s (1993) thought experiment, he describes the conduit metaphor as the work of an “evil magician” who is “very upset” by the effectiveness of the conscious communication practiced by intentional toolmakers (p. 185). “He hypnotized them in a special way, so that, after they received a set of instructions and struggled to build something on the basis of them, they would immediately forget about this” (p. 185). The idea is that the toolmakers would forget the struggle and the effort based on a “false memory that the object had been sent to them directly, via a marvelous mechanism in the hub” (p. 185).

Is the system of SI in the EP a false or fouled mechanism because it does not erase difference? An MEP said, “Language seems like a handicap for communication but I think it is a force” (OM62). Despite the strong themes of complaint and blame, the elements of a toolmakers paradigm are present, already. Schön elaborates:

The essential difficulties in social policy have more to do with problem setting than with problem solving, more to do with the ways in which we frame the purposes to be achieved than with the optimal means for achieving them. It becomes critically important, then, to learn how social

policy problems are actually set and to discover what it means to set them well or badly. (1993, p. 138)

Reddy is unequivocal in his critique of the conduit metaphor: “This model of communication objectifies meaning in a misleading and dehumanizing fashion. It influences us to talk and think about thoughts as if they had the same kind of external, intersubjective reality as lamps and tables” (1993, p. 186). Do Members of the European Parliament, their co-legislators in the Council and Commission, and the civil servants of the European Institutions, need to revisit and evaluate whether their “instruction manual for use of the language system...is the wrong manual” (Reddy, p. 188)?

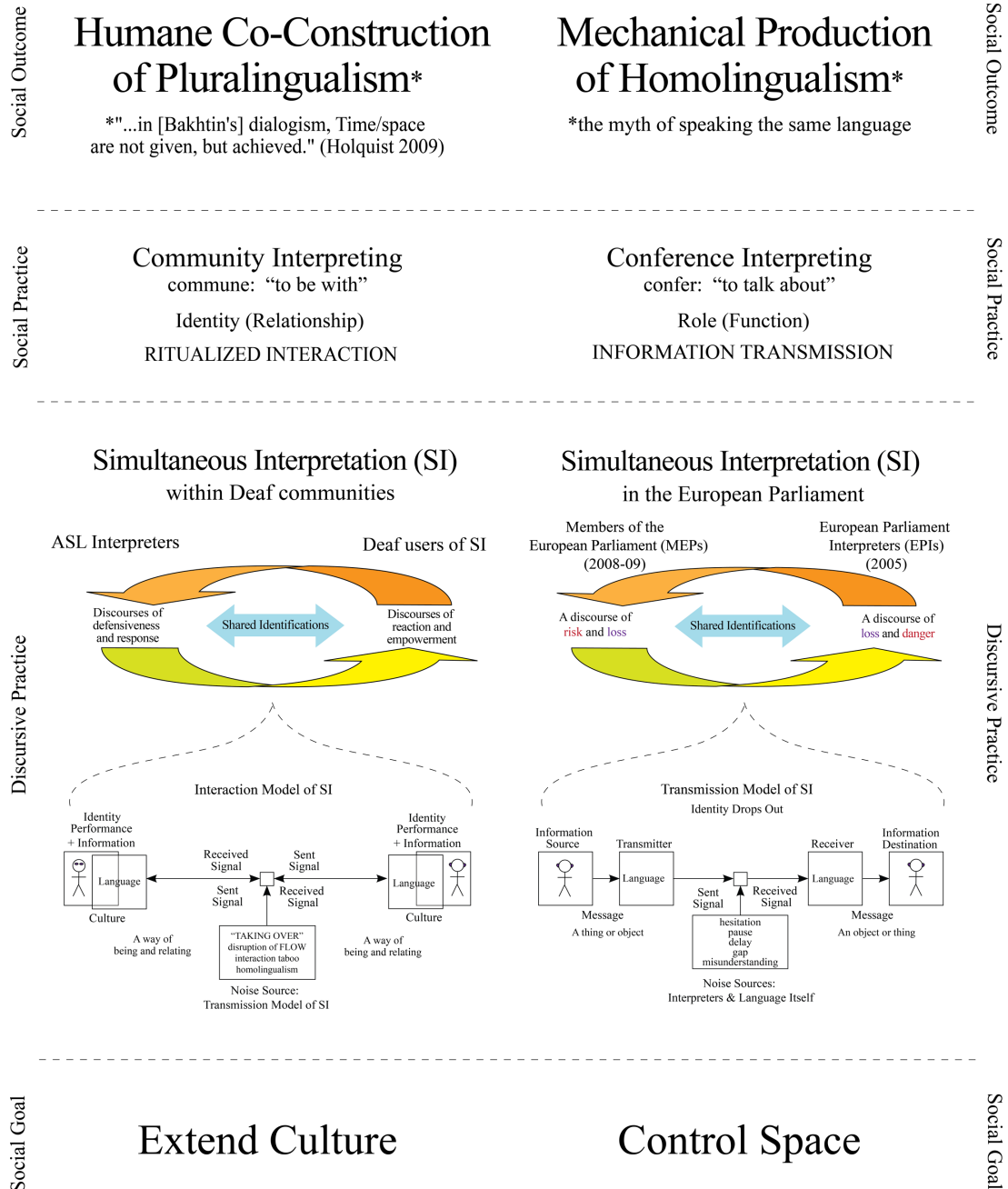


Figure 5. Two Interpreting Chronotopes

7.5.1 The Mechanical Reproduction of Inequality

It's a lost post occupied here, even with the best translation [sic].

New Member of the European Parliament

Interpreters refer to the European Parliament's new languages, and some of the small old languages, as exotic languages (F36). The instances of the pseudonym, Meridia, throughout this dissertation include references by Members of these countries to their own languages, including the new (post big bang enlargement) exotic languages from eastern Europe (Bulgarian, Czech, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Romanian, Slovak and Slovenian) as well as from the smaller exotic languages from old EU member nations (Danish, Hungarian, Finnish and Swedish).²⁷⁵ In a few instances, the fake label of Meridia is also used to mask the specificity of other Members in an effort to protect the anonymity of the volunteer participants in this research.

The following quote describes a Member's take on the use of English as a lingua franca (italics added):

The reason that you heard a lot of English [in the EPP's closed political group debate on totalitarianism] is not because English people are speaking on it but because the new countries, they tend to use English a lot. Surprisingly, more than their native language...*It's about acceptance. The kind of feeling that they have that their language is a minority language* and it may just apply to one country, so you'll find...I suspect with the new countries there's an element of making *an effort to be kind of integrated*. Because if you think that Swedes and Finns, they speak English very often, but I reckon they speak English more in Committees and Parliamentary Plenaries because they can speak English, basically,

²⁷⁵ At the risk of stereotyping, I've generalized many of the smaller or newer languages to the EU's language regime as exotic. In actual practice, "exotic" depends on the vantage point of each person according to his or her own language profile and relative exposure.

and some of them can speak very good English. And therefore *it's easier for them* to be understood by a wider group and not just through translation [sic]. So you do get, I'd say Swedes, Finns, maybe also Hungarians very much speaking English, even if their English is not very good, because they feel that's a way of speaking to a wider audience. (OM68)

This Member's discursive consciousness accords with the discourse analysis. The use of ELF is a concession involving a) an acceptance of minority status of one's own language and b) a desire for homolingualism ('to be integrated' and 'to be understood'). The idea that ELF-users are "understood by a wider group" may or may not be statistically true, but it certainly defines a core membership group on homolingual terms, therefore establishing the very language-based insider/outsider boundaries and hierarchies of inequality that interpreting is designed to level out. Finally, the notion that "it's easier" for the original speaker to use ELF is a very selective representation of the complexities of language choice. It ignores both the pressure of selective listening by colleagues and the communicative costs for non-fluent ELF users who surrender the rhetorical repertoire associated with the use of their mother tongue.

Rather than promoting the persistence of cultural and linguistic diversity, i.e., of plurilingualism, Members lament their perceived incapacity and envision a more homolingual future: "Doing my work in English is a handicap, but the young generation is better" (OM27). In the interests of speed, rules are bent and even broken: "A document prepared only in French may not be voted on because it is not in English, but an English-only document will be voted on" (F2). One Member called the language use dynamics "a meta-monolingualism" (NM28).

If the social norms for using interpreters are different from context to context, this knowledge did not become apparent during the research period. Based on the discourse,

in the smaller, informal meetings where fewer languages are in use, Members may be more proactive with codeswitching (as in Scenarios B, C, and F from Table 7), but very few participants in this study were able to name or describe alternative uses or understandings of interpretation along the lines of plurilingualism with its emphasis on the social aspects of interpreting (less than 10%). Even fewer recognized a non-conduit framing as viable. Instead, most MEPs seem to believe in “TINA: There Is No Alternative” regarding what is perceived as “a deep structural problem that can’t be overcome” (NM28).

Despite the admitted fact that “it is certainly a disadvantage, not to understand” (OM62), the system invites continued, unchanged use. After all, “we have all the boxes...” (OM36), gesturing to the booths lining the meeting rooms. In the end, the discourse themes of risk, loss, danger, complaint and blame cohere centripetally: “There’s only one second for this” (OM67). “We just did not have enough time” (NM73).

7.5.2 Pivot? Time for an Economy of Cultures, Not Control

“The economy is psychological—one factor is optimism” (NM25). Once the biases of homolingualism are identified, the natural move of intelligence is to become alert to their presence and effects in daily life: to detect their action in practical consciousness and begin to grow discursive consciousness. Once one has discursive consciousness, the linguascape changes. The possibilities for control reframe the behaviors and courses of action that are available and important within the narrow exigencies of the moment. The action research impetus of this fieldwork continues: which path will Parliament pursue?

To my knowledge, I was only introduced twice to groups that I had been invited to observe in a way that included a description. I was intrigued by these host Members' explanations of what I was doing. One Member said, "I told them that you are interested in the possibilities of a good translation" (OM67). The other said that I was interested in "how we can cope with our language system" (OM33). The latter MEP understood me better, while the former MEP illustrates the most basic condition of communication: meaning is in the mind of the listener. What I found and have gathered here is an interpretation of a discourse that exposes a system of simultaneous intercultural transaction trapped in the inertia of an ideology of speed and desire for homolingual communication.

Instead of creating and promoting the necessity and desirability of simultaneous interpretation as a crucial intercultural design element in a plurilingual European Union; a discourse of complaint and blame minimizes and disincentivizes entrants to the career field. Meanwhile, "the demand is ten times the need" (OM57). If the market was extended to interpreting in the community, such as is needed to provide quality interpretation to asylum seekers (or even the communication needs of current residents and citizens of Europe speaking foreign and minority languages), the explosion of jobs and extended circulation of capital in the economy would be phenomenal. A field of linguistic equality premised in the shared capability to communicate across difference (drawing upon Sen, 1992) could generate the basis of common European identity, not in the conduit metaphor terms of control, but on the basis of an expanding sphere of ritually shared experiences through participation in the special intercultural communication practice of simultaneous interpretation.

Think it's not possible? That's what was said about simultaneous interpreting at Nuremberg! And about the European Parliament, too: "No one ever thought [interpreting after the big bang enlargement] would be possible" (OM57). Given the enduring examples of successful SI, why is it that "few consider the cost of non-interpreting" (F25)?

7.5.3 The Heteroglossic and Plurilingual Reproduction of Diversity

We can't have the multilingualism [sic] without interpretation. It's necessary and I consider multilingualism as—I can't say the most important, but one of the very important basis of European Union. If we want the people, the inhabitants of the Europe Union, our wealth in European Union, we have to respect it, yes.

New Member of the European Parliament

Often, when I mentioned the possibility of community-style interpreting to Members, I would get a response like this: "Am I sitting in the coffee bar having a chat with you, or are you in the office with a task we have to do?" (OM78) Community-style interpreting can handle serious negotiating done over coffee, small talk that occurs in the office, and *Ad Personam* interpretation in meetings the Parliament structure has deemed 'informal.' Despite the formality of the institutional structure, "It's absolutely true that the political debate is a conversation. It should show the interpreting, and it does" (OM61). The fact that "sometimes it falls apart hugely" (OM03) is an indicator of difference: these glitches in the system are natural to the conditions of human communication. Rather than judging them on the basis of homolingual flow, the

dynamics of ‘mistakes’ and ‘misunderstanding’ offer potentially valuable clues toward creative resolutions that reach beyond the house into the public sphere.²⁷⁶

Learning to work with the laugh waves, for instance, and creating means for Members to share inspirational or instructive cultural contributions from their home countries through strategies that work *with* time, rather than against it, become possible with the development of discursive consciousness. Then, plurilingualism becomes a matter of political will and intercultural commitment. Differences of language use dynamics provide insight into what people value. In the debate regarding a statement by the Parliament on totalitarianism in Europe, EPP Members discussed matters calmly in a few of the major languages while in the Socialists’ group there was an extremely high percentage of mother tongue use and much more animation.²⁷⁷ At another time, mother tongue use broke out in the EPP group while discussing an issue of sex education. A fight on the working time directive also elicited more plurilingual behavior in some of the Political Groups than many other topics.

In all these instances, the interpreters rendered interpretations and those who were listening made progress sorting things out. “On the topics with ethical problems or complicated social aspects, it is difficult to express your ideas...it is always better to

²⁷⁶ Some recommendations are suggested in Appendix A, which includes the text of a report submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament summarizing key points of this research relevant to Members.

²⁷⁷ Fifty-two turns of talk in two hours, eleven languages total: only three of the 52 turns fully in English, with four more including English in a codeswitch. This extremely interactive debate involved Members speaking French, English, Swedish, German, Bulgarian, Estonian, Spanish (from a Czech MEP), Lithuanian (via *retour* to English), Slovakian, Czech and Greek. There was one observable technical glitch with a microphone that didn’t come on; it was resolved within seconds.

“speak your own language” (NM27). A fear expressed by some concerning proactively promoting the use of interpreting, is if it would interfere with language learning: “but, will it stop multilingual?” (OM59). No. These are not competing but complementary paradigms. ELF and other lingua francas have their place and time; the criticism offered here regards the presumed superior value of homolingual over interpreted transaction.

What’s even funnier and even cleverer, a Lithuanian, for example, will use a pun. He’ll pause, giving you the impression he’s looking for his words, but he’s not, he’s making you listen to what he’s saying, and then he’ll use an English word in a way which an Englishman wouldn’t, but it’s expressing what he’s thinking. I just think it’s terribly clever. But how on earth could an interpreter cope with that? Very difficult. (OM63)

Humor is clearly welcome!

They are some words not good interpreted. So I say that I’m surprised there’s not war in Europe because sometimes the positive sense is interpreted as a negative or the—how you say—the numbers...the statistics, 40 is 400 and 5 is 50 and so on. So there some very, very funny. (NM73)

Such grammatical and semantic glitches are inconsequential, and cleverness is appreciated (keeping Vuorikoski’s (2004) caveats in mind, sometimes linguistic puns and language games will require explanation). Substantively, “understanding what detention means” (F13) is vital: whose cultural notion of time passing will be codified, whose conception of the relative value of time spent in restrictive conditions of existence, is quite significant. The nub of the communication challenge for Europe is how to structurally design difference into a system seeking uniformity?

If you can distinguish when Members need to “speak their own language for political points so that it’s quoted in their national newspapers” (OM63), why not also learn to recognize the cultural value of generating a pluralilingual institutional culture in

which the consistent use of mother tongues and simultaneous interpretation is a) *just as normal* as multilingual codeswitching, and b) *equally valued* out of recognition of the long-term calibration to a chronotope that honors mutual intercultural understanding.

7.5.4 The Real Value of Interpreting

A senior politician at the European Parliament explained, “Normally people do not understand the difference between interpretation and translation. Translation remains there; interpretation is to allow people to communicate” (OM57). The distinction that matters is in the dimension of time. By creating rituals of interaction premised in controlling and managing the interpreter, information exchange becomes the exclusive constituent of relationships. Cultural distinctiveness drops out. The only thing shared is the shallow gesture of exchange. Mutual understanding and humane interconnection are rarely achieved. This temporal function of simultaneous interpretation is rarely highlighted in discursive consciousness. What the discourses about SI in the EP and SI in the American Deaf Community show is a conflict at the level of practical consciousness. Taken together, these two discourses show how language(s) and language use in social transactions contribute to social constructions of cultural realities by calibrating to particular chronotopes.

Two different orientations to time are evident in the discourses about the conference interpreting style prevalent in the European Parliament and the community interpreting style preferred by the culturally Deaf. To put it in very rough terms, the discourse about community interpreting emphasizes culture; while the discourse about conference interpreting emphasizes control. Simultaneous interpretation that leans toward the cultural dimension of communication involves communing in the present, being

aware of engaging in rituals of social transaction that compose the relationships and identities that sustain society. When simultaneous interpretation is understood as a kind of oral translation, such as in the system of SI in the EP, this emphasizes the information transmission dimension of communication, over-privileging the immediate control of space and neglecting the ritual dimension that controls and contains societies over time (Carey, 1992): i.e., in the *durée*, Bergson's *durance*. The assumptions of oral translating (if only understood from the paradigm of linguistic functionalism and the conduit model) are, instead, to seek to fix a (singular) meaning for the future: to exercise power in ways that attempt to reduce relationships to one homolingual dimension, re-inscribing inequality and ultimately destabilizing society.

On the basis of this analysis, interpreting has three essential values. The first value of interpreting is that it make time visible. This is evident in the discourse themes of complaint and the reasons given for choosing a lingua franca. The second value of interpreting stems from the first: by making time visible, interpreting makes culture visible: specifically cultural difference, which appears in social transactions as 'misunderstandings' and 'mistakes.' Because interpreting makes culture and cultural differences visible, it also makes power visible. This is evident in the hierarchical relationships demonstrated by the observations and explanations Members provide for listening behaviors, such as when to use or not use the headphones, when to use or not use interpreting services that are provided, and when to carry on when interpreting services are needed but not provided.

These values of interpreting have an exponential relationship with each other that results in discursive calibrations to timespace, generating the chronotopes that then shape

many of the material conditions of our lives. Understanding this creative generativity could enable individual and collective agency through the collective exercise of discursive consciousness. Participating in the special intercultural communication practice of simultaneously-interpreted transactions can bring the differential calibrations of homolingualism and pluralingualism into awareness. Rather than surrendering to the chronotope inherited from modernity, alert participants, interpretees and interpreters alike, can choose to bring the wisdom of lived experience and education into daily living and labor.

Freely giving one's words to an interpreter is a democratic act and a vote of confidence in the capacity of communication to establish connection without needing to erase difference. Listening to the words and expressions of another person expressed through the lens of interpreter embraces the inevitability that meaning is always flexible and contingent, that mutual understanding is an activity that requires energy and continual investments of attention and reflection. Holding time to allow for and normalize the syncopations of pluralingual flow through *retour* and *relay* equalizes the linguistic playing field. A discourse of pluralingualism could replace the discourse of homolingualism, especially in an institution like the European Parliament, which has as part of its mission to be a centering focal point for the constitution of a European identity premised in the preservation of linguistic diversity.

Simultaneous interpretation draws attention to chronotopes and highlights the existential tension between homolingualism and pluralingualism. Do we want to live in a world where people speak different languages but all say the same thing? Or a world in which people speak different languages and say different things? The essential contribution of

simultaneous interpretation is to collaboratively generate a livable future. Yes, learn languages! Participate as an interpretee in simultaneously-interpreted social transactions, even become an interpreter! Engage the paradox: Europe has an amazing opportunity to hurry up and create the rituals that allow us all to slow down and solve some serious problems.

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO KLAUS WELLE AND TARGETED REPORT

Klaus Welle
Secretary-General
The European Parliament
Rue Wiertz
B-1047
Brussels

9 July 2009

Dear Klaus,

We, the undersigned, had many conversations about our experiences with interpreting in the Parliament with a researcher, Ms. Stephanie Jo Kent (Fulbright Fellow, USA), during the past year. We think a summary of her research findings on the 'System of Simultaneous Interpretation in the European Parliament' will be an invaluable tool for Members of this House. We write to commend this report from an outsider's perspective to you and to recommend that you approve the circulation of her brief (2000 word) summary to all MEPs in the various working languages of the Parliament. We believe that Ms Kent's summary will be of great benefit to members, particularly the large proportion of new members to whom simultaneous interpretation is unfamiliar.

Discussing the empirical findings and analysis is important for us to consider as we integrate new Members into this complex communication system. In our talks, Ms Kent raised questions and perspectives that shed new light on the importance of simultaneous interpretation to our work in the European Parliament. She has learned from us **the most common problems and, based on these, offers recommendations for the effective and efficient use of our language system.** We believe her summary will provide a crucial perspective on our use of languages and interpretation services in the Parliament. Most significantly, this knowledge will provide a firm foundation for members to make informed decisions about using their official language or a lingua franca, as well as orient all of us to the common culture being created when we communicate through simultaneous interpretation.

We hope that you will look favourably upon this request by placing it on the Bureau's agenda for 15 September 2009.

Yours sincerely,

Struan Stevenson MEP
Bart Staes MEP
Simon Busuttil MEP
Claude Moraes MEP
Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert MEP
György Schöpflin MEP
Jiří Maštálka MEP

To: Members of the European Parliament

From: Stephanie Jo Kent, Fulbright Fellow, PhD Candidate in Communication

Re: Request to the Bureau to authorize translation and distribution of the following Research Report (un-commissioned) to Members about Language Use Strategies and the System of Simultaneous Interpretation

Date: 7 February 2010

Findings and recommendations based on conversations with 55 Members about their use of the system of simultaneous interpretation in 2008-2009.

Table [7]: MEPs language choices and strategies when addressing other MEPs.

See this table in the text; was Table 1 in the original report.

Discussion of Table [7]:

The choices and strategies outlined in Table [7] show that Members (in 2008-2009) are sophisticated in terms of adapting quickly to the presence/absence of simultaneous interpretation (SI). The main discursive themes from direct conversations with Members about interpreting in the EP include:

- proclamations concerning the utility (or even necessity) of knowing English,
- politicization of the language choices of Members who choose to use their official language and rely on the group's collaborative use of the process of interpretation,
- low-key criticism of (so-called) interpreter errors (compensated by *de rigour* proclamations of EP Interpreters being the best in the world), and
- assumptions that SI can be measured according to the standards and effects of frozen translations of legislation.

In general, however, Members focus so sharply on the task (generating EU legislation through debate, deliberation, and compromise) that less attention is given to the processes

of constructing meaning through SI, exposing a non-strategic, passive construction by Members of institutional norms and attitudes regarding language use. The implications of a laissez-faire approach to the use of simultaneous interpretation combined with the attitudes evident in themes above are significant. Under-utilization and deliberate non-utilization become ‘goals’ in this model for SI systems. This outcome may explain the main finding from Members’ talk about SI: which is their dual sense of *risk* and *loss* regarding communication in the EP.

Snapshots of a language culture after Enlargement (2005-2009):

Table [7] illustrates the result of strategies developed by Members as they learned how to cope with the challenges of the enlarged language regime that was instituted at the beginning of the Sixth Term. In the spring of 2005, EP Interpreters described, among other things, a sense of *danger* and *loss* as MEPs displayed inadequate language skills (Kent, 2009). The two groups (Interpreters, Members) do not refer to exactly the same risks, dangers, and losses. However, the presence of strongly-felt sentiments indicates the extent and depth to which culture is being created and shared among people who have different roles and responsibilities within the institution. See Table [8].

Theoretical Implications:

Multiple fluencies and the ability to switch quickly among languages is an individual talent or acquired skill that is independent of culture. Switching languages is akin to changing channels but keeping the same “direct” frequency. The repetition and aggregation of privileging the choice of a lingua franca rather than SI is what generates culture – and shared identity.

Table [8]: Comparison of Dangers, Risks, and Losses between MEPs and EP Interpreters (EPIs)

See Table 8 in the main text; was Table 2 in the original report.

Organizational and Representational Implications:

It appears that power dynamics within the institution have been shifted, at least in part, onto the language structure of the SI system. MEPs desire to control meaning, combined with a general distrust of simultaneous interpretation, leads to language use choices that are *monolingual in character* rather than essentially [plura]lingual.²⁷⁸ One of the best uses of SI, for instance, is to explore the full range of each language and culture's vantage point on a particular matter. If such perspectives are explored during negotiations they can be worked through in advance of the legal translations, thus avoiding the discovery of contradictions after the legislative process is supposed to be complete.

Recommendations (Practical):

- 1 Conceive of the interpreters as allies; they want to make you understood.
- 2 Use the new Ad Personam interpretation service as much as possible. "The places where you most need interpretation," explained a Member, "is where you are least likely to receive it."
- 3 Write speeches in advance – but use the revision process to clarify one or two key points rather than pack in as much nuance as possible. Consider:
 - a. What is your communicative goal, and
 - b. Who is your audience?

²⁷⁸ At the time of writing the original report, I had not yet internalized the theoretical necessity of replacing *multilingualism* with *plurilingualism*.

- 4 If you must pack in as much as you can, *add clarifying contextual details for the interpreter*. This is more work but the result will be closer to your aim.
- 5 Seek patterns in so-called “errors” of interpretation in order to *broaden perception* of the range of causal factors (see General Recommendation “D” below).
- 6 Take advantage of pauses and delays during interpretation to think deeply about what is being said and the possible directions the conversation could go.
- 7 Consider the effects of using jokes and famous cultural quotations: relational or informative? If the main purpose is to convey cultural strengths and unique qualities, this calls for a particular kind of translation. If you want an emotional effect (laughter, inspiration, shame, etc.), that may require a different ‘spin’ in [interpretation].²⁷⁹ An efficient system could be built to streamline the dissemination of adequate translations (see General Recommendation “E” below).

Recommendations (General):

- 1 Imagine the interpreter as an extension of your own intellect, but remember they are not telepathic – the more you give them to work with (background, context, goals, etc), the more closely they will come to matching the effect you want to create in your audience.
- 2 Remain aware of the distinction between “interpretation” and “translation.” Even though “translation” technically includes both written and spoken forms, when you describe the interpreters or the process of simultaneous interpretation as “translation” you invoke the standards of legal linguistics – the consequence is forgetting that simultaneous interpretation involves live speech which has the quality of always being able to be corrected, refined, and revised through interaction.
- 3 Being able to switch language channels is a substitution of a different type of monolingualism, not the preservation of linguistic difference. Only when the SI is in use and you are engaged (at some level) with the tensions of difference (especially of time/timing, and cross-cultural understanding) are

²⁷⁹ Similarly (to the preceding footnote), it seemed useful (at the time of generating this report) to use the more familiar term, *translation*. The concept of *interpretation* is more accurate and precise.

you participating in multilingualism [technically, *pluralilingualism*] as a new form of common European identity.

- a. What kind of intercultural communication do you want to model?
 - b. Which basis for sharing identity do you want to affirm?
- 4 Cultivate a capacity for exploring “errors” of interpretation. The explanation may provide more important information than the error itself: (4a) and (4b) (below) are communication problems at the interpersonal level; (4c) at the organizational level; and 4(d) at the institutional level.
- a. Is it an error of fact or confusion that will be remedied through repetition and thus is no cause for concern?
 - b. Is it an error of fact or confusion that could lead to a problem later, and thus needs to be addressed and corrected now?
 - c. Is the error an indicator of lack of cooperation between the speaking Member(s) and the working interpreters in the relevant booths?
 - d. Is it possible the speaker is making an unexpected rhetorical move, beyond or outside of the usual discourse?
- 4 A “Joke and Quote” hotline/database could be constructed over time, built up through a dedicated internal communication system. For instance:
- a. MEPs or their Assistants send the joke/quote to the Head of Booth for the language in which they’ll speak (e.g., Hungarian).
 - b. Head of Booth delegates the task (as appropriate) of crafting translations with explanation.
 - c. Distribution to all “B” interpreters of the source language (via email with a copy to the database keeper). These Groups can be set up in advance.
 - d. The Datakeeper position may become a focal point quickly or over time, pending repetition of jokes/quotes and/or frequency of use, which may necessitate streamlining the communication flow in a different sequence.
- 5 Over time the capacity of everyone – Interpreters and Members alike – will build, and together you will develop a stronger multilingual/multicultural container for creating the common European identity out of the mix of cultural and linguistic differences.

Concluding remarks:

The system of simultaneous interpretation in the European Parliament is administered with a level of sophistication that facilitates the political work you are here to do. An effect of the system's generally smooth operation is to experience pauses, delays, mistakes, and misunderstandings as disappointing breakdowns or rude ruptures. Rather than a cause of problems, these could be viewed as opportunities for developing collaborative skill in using SI among different languages to improve communication and decision-making to yield a stronger, more creative Parliament for the citizens of Europe.

Kent, Stephanie Jo. 2009. "A Discourse of Danger and Loss: Interpreters on Interpreting for the European Parliament." In *Quality in Interpreting: A Shared Responsibility*. Sandra Hale and Uldis Ozolins (Eds.). Amsterdam: John Benjamin's Publishing Company.

This copyrighted report is a selection of research findings of particular interest to Members. Please request the Bureau of the European Parliament to authorize translation into all EU official languages and distribution to current MEPs and EP Interpreters.

25 January 2010, © Stephanie Jo Kent

APPENDIX B

NAD-RID CODE OF CONDUCT



CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Registry of Interpreters
for the Deaf
333 Commerce Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703/838-0030 (V)
703/838-0459 (TTY)
703/838-0454 (Fax)
www.rid.org

NAD-RID CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Scope

The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID) uphold high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct for interpreters. Embodied in this Code of Professional Conduct (formerly known as the Code of Ethics) are seven tenets setting forth guiding principles, followed by illustrative behaviors.

The tenets of this Code of Professional Conduct are to be viewed holistically and as a guide to professional behavior. This document provides assistance in complying with the code. The guiding principles offer the basis upon which the tenets are articulated. The illustrative behaviors are not exhaustive, but are indicative of the conduct that may either conform to or violate a specific tenet or the code as a whole.

When in doubt, the reader should refer to the explicit language of the tenet. If further clarification is needed, questions may be directed to the national office of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.

This Code of Professional Conduct is sufficient to encompass interpreter roles and responsibilities in every type of situation (e.g., educational, legal, medical). A separate code for each area of interpreting is neither necessary nor advisable.

Philosophy

The American Deaf community represents a cultural and linguistic group having the inalienable right to full and equal communication and to participation in all aspects of society. Members of the American Deaf community have the right to informed choice and the highest quality interpreting services. Recognition of the communication rights of America's women, men, and children who are deaf is the foundation of the tenets, principles, and behaviors set forth in this Code of Professional Conduct.

Voting Protocol

This Code of Professional Conduct was presented through mail referendum to certified interpreters who are members in good standing with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. and the National Association of the Deaf. The vote was to adopt or to reject.

Adoption of this Code of Professional Conduct

Interpreters who are members in good standing with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. and the National Association of the Deaf voted to adopt this Code of Professional Conduct, effective July 1, 2005. This Code of Professional Conduct is a working document that is expected to change over time. The aforementioned members may be called upon to vote, as may be needed from time to time, on the tenets of the code.

The guiding principles and the illustrative behaviors may change periodically to meet the needs and requirements of the RID Ethical Practices System. These sections of the Code of Professional Conduct will not require a vote of the members. However, members are encouraged to recommend changes for future updates.

Function of the Guiding Principles

It is the obligation of every interpreter to exercise judgment, employ critical thinking, apply the benefits of practical experience, and reflect on past actions in the practice of their profession. The guiding principles in this document represent the concepts of confidentiality, linguistic and professional competence, impartiality, professional growth and development, ethical business practices, and the rights of participants in interpreted situations to informed choice. The driving force behind the guiding principles is the notion that the interpreter will do no harm.

When applying these principles to their conduct, interpreters remember that their choices are governed by a "reasonable interpreter" standard. This standard represents the hypothetical interpreter who is appropriately educated, informed, capable, aware of professional standards, and fair-minded.



CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Registry of Interpreters
for the Deaf
333 Commerce Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703/838-0030 (V)
703/838-0459 (TTY)
703/838-0454 (Fax)
www.rid.org

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Tenets

1. Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.
2. Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.
3. Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.
4. Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.
5. Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns, and students of the profession.
6. Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.
7. Interpreters engage in professional development.

Applicability

- A. This Code of Professional Conduct applies to certified and associate members of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., Certified members of the National Association of the Deaf, interns, and students of the profession.
- B. Federal, state or other statutes or regulations may supersede this Code of Professional Conduct. When there is a conflict between this code and local, state, or federal laws and regulations, the interpreter obeys the rule of law.
- C. This Code of Professional Conduct applies to interpreted situations that are performed either face-to-face or remotely.

Definitions

For the purpose of this document, the following terms are used:

Colleagues: Other interpreters.

Conflict of Interest: A conflict between the private interests (personal, financial, or professional) and the official or professional responsibilities of an interpreter in a position of trust, whether actual or perceived, deriving from a specific interpreting situation.

Consumers: Individuals and entities who are part of the interpreted situation. This includes individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, and hearing.

1.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

Tenets: Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters hold a position of trust in their role as linguistic and cultural facilitators of communication. Confidentiality is highly valued by consumers and is essential to protecting all involved.

Each interpreting situation (e.g., elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education, legal, medical, mental health) has a standard of confidentiality. Under the reasonable interpreter standard, professional interpreters are expected to know the general requirements and applicability of various levels of confidentiality. Exceptions to confidentiality include, for example, federal and state laws requiring mandatory reporting of abuse or threats of suicide, or responding to subpoenas.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 1.1 Share assignment-related information only on a confidential and "as-needed" basis (e.g., supervisors, interpreter team members, members of the educational team, hiring entities).



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- 1.2 Manage data, invoices, records, or other situational or consumer-specific information in a manner consistent with maintaining consumer confidentiality (e.g., shredding, locked files).
- 1.3 Inform consumers when federal or state mandates require disclosure of confidential information.

2.0 PROFESSIONALISM

Tenet: Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to stay abreast of evolving language use and trends in the profession of interpreting as well as in the American Deaf community.

Interpreters accept assignments using discretion with regard to skill, communication mode, setting, and consumer needs. Interpreters possess knowledge of American Deaf culture and deafness-related resources.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 2.1 Provide service delivery regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other factor.
- 2.2 Assess consumer needs and the interpreting situation before and during the assignment and make adjustments as needed.
- 2.3 Render the message faithfully by conveying the content and spirit of what is being communicated, using language most readily understood by consumers, and correcting errors discreetly and expeditiously.
- 2.4 Request support (e.g., certified deaf interpreters, team members, language facilitators) when needed to fully convey the message or to address exceptional communication challenges (e.g. cognitive disabilities, foreign sign language, emerging language ability, or lack of formal instruction or language).
- 2.5 Refrain from providing counsel, advice, or personal opinions.
- 2.6 Judiciously provide information or referral regarding available interpreting or community resources without infringing upon consumers' rights.

3.0 CONDUCT

Tenet: Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to present themselves appropriately in demeanor and appearance. They avoid situations that result in conflicting roles or perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 3.1 Consult with appropriate persons regarding the interpreting situation to determine issues such as placement and adaptations necessary to interpret effectively.
- 3.2 Decline assignments or withdraw from the interpreting profession when not competent due to physical, mental, or emotional factors.
- 3.3 Avoid performing dual or conflicting roles in interdisciplinary (e.g. educational or mental health teams) or other settings.
- 3.4 Comply with established workplace codes of conduct, notify appropriate personnel if there is a conflict with this Code of Professional Conduct, and actively seek resolution where warranted.
- 3.5 Conduct and present themselves in an unobtrusive manner and exercise care in choice of attire.



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- 3.6 Refrain from the use of mind-altering substances before or during the performance of duties.
- 3.7 Disclose to parties involved any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- 3.8 Avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest that might cause harm or interfere with the effectiveness of interpreting services.
- 3.9 Refrain from using confidential interpreted information for personal, monetary, or professional gain.
- 3.10 Refrain from using confidential interpreted information for the benefit of personal or professional affiliations or entities.

4.0 RESPECT FOR CONSUMERS

Tenet: Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to honor consumer preferences in selection of interpreters and interpreting dynamics, while recognizing the realities of qualifications, availability, and situation.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 4.1 Consider consumer requests or needs regarding language preferences, and render the message accordingly (interpreted or transliterated).
- 4.2 Approach consumers with a professional demeanor at all times.
- 4.3 Obtain the consent of consumers before bringing an intern to an assignment.
- 4.4 Facilitate communication access and equality, and support the full interaction and independence of consumers.

5.0 RESPECT FOR COLLEAGUES

Tenet: Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns and students of the profession.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to collaborate with colleagues to foster the delivery of effective interpreting services. They also understand that the manner in which they relate to colleagues reflects upon the profession in general.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 5.1 Maintain civility toward colleagues, interns, and students.
- 5.2 Work cooperatively with team members through consultation before assignments regarding logistics, providing professional and courteous assistance when asked and monitoring the accuracy of the message while functioning in the role of the support interpreter.
- 5.3 Approach colleagues privately to discuss and resolve breaches of ethical or professional conduct through standard conflict resolution methods; file a formal grievance only after such attempts have been unsuccessful or the breaches are harmful or habitual.
- 5.4 Assist and encourage colleagues by sharing information and serving as mentors when appropriate.
- 5.5 Obtain the consent of colleagues before bringing an intern to an assignment.



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6.0 BUSINESS PRACTICES

Tenets: Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to conduct their business in a professional manner whether in private practice or in the employ of an agency or other entity. Professional interpreters are entitled to a living wage based on their qualifications and expertise. Interpreters are also entitled to working conditions conducive to effective service delivery.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 6.1 Accurately represent qualifications, such as certification, educational background, and experience, and provide documentation when requested.
- 6.2 Honor professional commitments and terminate assignments only when fair and justifiable grounds exist.
- 6.3 Promote conditions that are conducive to effective communication, inform the parties involved if such conditions do not exist, and seek appropriate remedies.
- 6.4 Inform appropriate parties in a timely manner when delayed or unable to fulfill assignments.
- 6.5 Reserve the option to decline or discontinue assignments if working conditions are not safe, healthy, or conducive to interpreting.
- 6.6 Refrain from harassment or coercion before, during, or after the provision of interpreting services.
- 6.7 Render pro bono services in a fair and reasonable manner.
- 6.8 Charge fair and reasonable fees for the performance of interpreting services and arrange for payment in a professional and judicious manner.

7.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Tenets: Interpreters engage in professional development.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to foster and maintain interpreting competence and the stature of the profession through ongoing development of knowledge and skills.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 7.1 Increase knowledge and strengthen skills through activities such as:
 - pursuing higher education;
 - attending workshops and conferences;
 - seeking mentoring and supervision opportunities;
 - participating in community events; and
 - engaging in independent studies.
- 7.2 Keep abreast of laws, policies, rules, and regulations that affect the profession.

APPENDIX C

PROVISION AND EXCEPTIONS FOR THE LEGAL REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Provision of Simultaneous Interpretation in the European Parliament

*Rule 138 Languages*²⁸⁰

- 1 All documents of Parliament shall be drawn up in the official languages.
- 2 All Members shall have the right to speak in Parliament in the official language of their choice. Speeches delivered in one of the official languages shall be simultaneously interpreted into the other official languages and into any other language the Bureau may consider necessary.
- 3 Interpretation shall be provided in committee and delegation meetings from and into the official languages used and requested by the members and substitutes of that committee or delegation.
- 4 At committee and delegation meetings away from the usual places of work interpretation shall be provided from and into the languages of those members who have confirmed that they will attend the meeting. These arrangements may exceptionally be made more flexible where the members of the committee or delegation so agree. In the event of disagreement, the Bureau shall decide.

Where it has been established after the result of a vote has been announced that there are discrepancies between different language versions, the President shall decide whether the result announced is valid pursuant to Rule 164(5). If he declares the result valid, he shall decide which version is to be regarded as having been adopted.

However, the original version cannot be taken as the official text as a general rule, since a situation may arise in which all the other languages differ from the original text.

²⁸⁰ All quotations are from the Rules of Procedure (16th Edition, European Parliament, 2004).

Exceptions to providing simultaneous interpretation

Rule 81 Implementing measures

- 1 When the Commission forwards a draft of implementing measures to Parliament, the President shall refer the draft of measures to the committee responsible for the act from which the implementing measures derive. When the procedure with associated committees has been applied with regard to the basic act, the committee responsible shall invite each of the associated committees to communicate its views orally or by letter.
- 2 The chair of the committee responsible shall set a deadline for Members to propose that the committee object to the draft of measures. Where the committee considers it to be appropriate, it may decide to appoint a rapporteur from among its members or permanent substitutes. If the committee objects to the draft of measures, it shall table a motion for a resolution opposing the adoption of the draft of measures which may also indicate the changes that ought to be made to the draft of measures.

If, within the applicable deadline calculated from the date of receipt of the draft of measures, Parliament adopts such a resolution the President shall request the Commission to withdraw or amend the draft of measures or submit a proposal under the appropriate legislative procedure.⁴⁷²

- 3 Where there is no part-session before the deadline expires, the right of response shall be deemed to have been delegated to the committee responsible. This response shall take the form of a letter from the committee chair to the Member of the Commission responsible, and shall be brought to the attention of all Members of Parliament.
- 4 If the implementing measures envisaged by the Commission fall under the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, paragraph 3 shall not apply and paragraphs 1 and 2 shall be supplemented as follows:
 - a the time for scrutiny²⁸¹ shall start to run when the draft of measures has been submitted to Parliament in all official languages. Where shorter time-limits

²⁸¹ Rule 79 Procedures relating to scrutiny of voluntary agreements

1. Where the Commission informs Parliament of its intention to explore the use of voluntary agreements as an alternative to legislation, the committee responsible may draw up a report on the substantive issue in question pursuant to Rule 45.
2. When the Commission announces that it intends to enter into a voluntary agreement, the committee responsible may table a motion for a resolution recommending the approval or rejection of the proposal, and under what conditions.

apply (Article 5a(5)(b) of Council Decision 1999/468/EC laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission) and in cases of urgency (Article 5a(6) of Decision 1999/468/EC), the time for scrutiny shall, unless the chair of the committee responsible objects, start to run from the date of receipt by Parliament of the final draft implementing measures in the language versions submitted to the members of the committee established in accordance with Decision 1999/468/EC. Rule 138 shall not apply in this case;

- b Parliament, acting by a majority of its component members, may oppose the adoption of the draft of measures, justifying its opposition by indicating that the draft of measures exceeds the implementing powers provided for in the basic instrument, is not compatible with the aim or the content of the basic instrument or does not respect the principles of subsidiarity or proportionality;
- c if the draft of measures is based on paragraph 5 or 6 of Article 5a of Decision 1999/468/EC, which provides for curtailed time-limits for opposition by Parliament, a motion for a resolution opposing the adoption of the draft of measures may be tabled by the chair of the committee responsible if the committee has not been able to meet in the time available.

Rule 90 Recommendations within the framework of the common foreign and security policy

- 1 The committee responsible for the common foreign and security policy may draw up recommendations to the Council in its areas of responsibility after obtaining authorisation from the Conference of Presidents or on a proposal within the meaning of Rule 114.
- 2 In urgent cases the authorisation referred to in paragraph 1 may be granted by the President, who may likewise authorise an emergency meeting of the committee concerned.
- 3 During the process for adopting these recommendations, which must be put to the vote in the form of a written text, Rule 138 shall not apply and oral amendments shall be admissible.

The non-application of Rule 138 is possible only in committee and only in urgent cases. Neither at committee meetings not declared to be urgent nor in plenary sitting may there be any departure from the provisions of Rule 138.

The provision stating that oral amendments shall be admissible means that members may not object to oral amendments being put to the vote in committee.

- 4 Recommendations drawn up in this way shall be included on the agenda for the next part session. In urgent cases decided upon by the President, recommendations may be included on the agenda of a current part-session. Recommendations shall be deemed adopted unless, before the beginning of the part-session, at least 37 Members submit a written objection, in which case the committee's recommendations shall be included on the agenda of the same part-session for debate and voting. A political group or at least 37 Members may table amendments.

Rule 139 Transitional arrangement

- 1 Exceptionally, in applying Rule 138, account shall be taken, with regard to the official languages of the Member States which acceded to the European Union on 1 May 2004, as of that date and until 31 December 2006, of the availability in real terms and sufficient numbers of the requisite interpreters and translators.
- 2 The Secretary-General shall each quarter submit a detailed report to the Bureau on the progress made towards full application of Rule 138, and shall send a copy thereof to all Members.
- 3 On a reasoned recommendation from the Bureau, Parliament may decide at any time to repeal this Rule early or, at the end of the period indicated in paragraph 1, to extend it.²⁸²

Rule 176 Committees of inquiry

- 7 A committee of inquiry may contact the institutions or persons referred to in Article 3 of the Decision referred to in paragraph 2 with a view to holding a hearing or obtaining documents.

Travel and accommodation expenses of members and officials of Community institutions and bodies shall be borne by the latter. Travel and accommodation expenses of other persons who appear before a committee of inquiry shall be reimbursed by the European Parliament in accordance with the rules governing hearings of experts. Persons called to give evidence before a committee of inquiry may claim the rights they would enjoy if acting as a witness before a tribunal in their country of origin. They must be informed of these rights before they make a statement to the committee.

²⁸² “On 11 March 2009 the European Parliament adopted a resolution to prolong the provisional derogations with regard to the use of especially Irish and Maltese until the end of the parliamentary term from 2009 to 2014.” Grahnlaw Euroblog: Retrieved 7 April 2014, <http://grahnlaw.blogspot.com/2009/03/european-parliament-amendments-rules-of.html>

With regard to the languages used, a committee of inquiry shall apply the provisions of Rule 138. However, the bureau of the committee:

- may restrict interpretation to the official languages of those who are to take part in the deliberations, if it deems this necessary for reasons of confidentiality,
- shall decide about translation of the documents received in such a way as to ensure that the committee can carry out its deliberations efficiently and rapidly and that the necessary secrecy and confidentiality are respected.

APPENDIX D

LEGAL REFERENCES TO “UNDERSTANDING” INTERPRETATION DURING CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

DIRECTIVE 2010/64/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE
COUNCIL of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal
proceedings

Relevant paragraphs from the preamble:

(14) The right to interpretation and translation for those who do not speak or understand the language of the proceedings is enshrined in Article 6 of the ECHR, as interpreted in the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights. This Directive facilitates the application of that right in practice. To that end, the aim of this Directive is to ensure the right of suspected or accused persons to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings with a view to ensuring their right to a fair trial.

(15) The rights provided for in this Directive should also apply, as necessary accompanying measures, to the execution of a European arrest warrant ^(2) within the limits provided for by this Directive. Executing Member States should provide, and bear the costs of, interpretation and translation for the benefit of the requested persons who do not speak or understand the language of the proceedings.

^(2) Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA of 13 June 2002 on the European arrest warrant and the surrender procedures between Member States (OJ L 190, 18.7.2002, p. 1).

(17) This Directive should ensure that there is free and adequate linguistic assistance, allowing suspected or accused persons who do not speak or understand the language of the criminal proceedings fully to exercise their right of defence and safeguarding the fairness of the proceedings.

(21) Member States should ensure that there is a procedure or mechanism in place to ascertain whether suspected or accused persons speak and understand the language of the criminal proceedings and whether they need the assistance of an interpreter. Such procedure or mechanism implies that competent authorities verify in any appropriate manner, including by consulting the suspected or accused persons concerned, whether they speak and understand the language of the criminal proceedings and whether they need the assistance of an interpreter.

(22) Interpretation and translation under this Directive should be provided in the native language of the suspected or accused persons or in any other language that they speak or

understand in order to allow them fully to exercise their right of defence, and in order to safeguard the fairness of the proceedings.

Relevant paragraphs from *Article 2*: **Right to interpretation**

1. Member States shall ensure that suspected or accused persons who do not speak or understand the language of the criminal proceedings concerned are provided, without delay, with interpretation during criminal proceedings before investigative and judicial authorities, including during police questioning, all court hearings and any necessary interim hearings.

4. Member States shall ensure that a procedure or mechanism is in place to ascertain whether suspected or accused persons speak and understand the language of the criminal proceedings and whether they need the assistance of an interpreter.

7. In proceedings for the execution of a European arrest warrant, the executing Member State shall ensure that its competent authorities provide persons subject to such proceedings who do not speak or understand the language of the proceedings with interpretation in accordance with this Article.

Relevant paragraphs from *Article 3*: **Right to translation of essential documents**

1. Member States shall ensure that suspected or accused persons who do not understand the language of the criminal proceedings concerned are, within a reasonable period of time, provided with a written translation of all documents which are essential to ensure that they are able to exercise their right of defence and to safeguard the fairness of the proceedings.

6. In proceedings for the execution of a European arrest warrant, the executing Member State shall ensure that its competent authorities provide any person subject to such proceedings who does not understand the language in which the European arrest warrant is drawn up, or into which it has been translated by the issuing Member State, with a written translation of that document.

APPENDIX E

AD PERSONAM INTERPRETING



PARLEMENT EUROPEEN
Direction générale Interprétation et Conférences (DG INTE)
Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences (DG INTE)

Demande - INTERPRETATION AD PERSONAM - Request

Introduite pour - Introduced for (nom du Député - name of the MEP)

Demande faite en tant que - Request introduced as

- ☐ Vice président PE/ EP Vice-President ☐ Questeur/Quaestor
- ☐ Président de Commission/Committee Chair ☐ Rapporteur ☐ Rapporteur fictif/Shadow rapporteur
- ☐ Rapporteur pour avis/Draftsperson for an opinion ☐ Rapporteur fictif pour avis/Shadow opinion draftsperson
- ☐ Coordinateur Groupe politique / Political group coordinator

Titre du rapport - Title of the report

Sujet de l'entretien - Subject of discussion

Commission - Committee

Informations concernant la réunion - Meeting information

Date Lieu - Place Début - Start Fin - End

Langues demandées - Languages requested

Nombre de participants - Number of participants

Date de la demande - Request date

Nom - Name

Député - MEP ☐ Assistant ☐

Signature

Envoyer demande à - Send request to: INTE.InterpretationAdPersonam (signé et scanné - signed and scanned)
Tel BRU: (+32 2 28) 42680 - Fax BRU: (+32 2 28) 40622 - Tel STR: (+33 3 88 1) 64250 Fax STR: (+33 3 88 1) 7994
DG INTE - ACI Recruitment Unit, ATR 09K063 - WIC MO 1094

Consultez les règles d'utilisation pour ce service sur la page 2. See specific rules applicable to this service on page 2.

Rapport de Session - Session Report

Horaire effectif - Actual working time début - start

fin - end

Observations éventuelles - Comments (if any)

Député (ou assistant) - MEP (or assistant)

Date

Nom - Name

Signature

Interprète - Interpreter

Date

Nom - Name

Signature

Remettre à - Hand in to DG INTE ACI Recruitment, ATR 09K063 - Fax Bru: (+32 2 28) 40622 - Fax Str: (+33 3 88 1) 79946.

Formulaire actualisé le - Form last updated: 19.11.08

1

Règles d'utilisation du service *INTERPRETATION AD PERSONAM*

- Les Vice présidents du PE, Questeurs, Présidents de Commissions, Rapporteurs, Rapporteurs fictifs, Rapporteurs pour avis, Rapporteurs pour avis fictifs et Coordinateurs des Groupes politiques ont droit à ce service.
- L'IAP pourra être offerte uniquement à Bruxelles et à Strasbourg, les jours ouvrables (jours de fête ou de fermeture des bureaux exclus).
- Toute demande devra être introduite au moins 3 jours ouvrables avant la date de la réunion.
- Les langues desservies sont les langues officielles excepté le maltais et l'irlandais.
- Le mode d'interprétation est en général le chuchotage ou la consécutive. L'utilisation d'autres modes (simultanée, "valise") sera décidé par la DG INTE, selon la disponibilité des ressources, des installations nécessaires et les paramètres contenus dans la demande formulée. La téléconférence ou la vidéoconférence ne pourront en aucun cas se faire, si la DG INTE n'a pas été prévenue longtemps à l'avance pour en tester la faisabilité. L'interprétation par téléphone (SKYPE...) et l'interprétation de films sont exclues.
- La réservation de la salle, s'il ne s'agit pas du bureau du député, sera faite par les soins des collaborateurs du député, selon les règles en vigueur.
- Toute demande donne lieu à débit du crédit virtuel, même si la demande est annulée par la suite.
- Tout changement de lieu géographique, de date, d'heure ou de langue(s) est considéré comme une nouvelle demande et imputée comme telle.
- Toute fraction d'heure est comptabilisée comme une heure entière.
- L'attente de l'interprète sur place est imputée comme temps de travail.
- Le dépassement de la durée prévue ne peut pas être décidé sur place unilatéralement par le député, vu que l'interprète pourra être affecté pour le créneau horaire suivant à un autre député, afin de rentabiliser son recrutement; il en va de même pour le changement de mode d'interprétation ou du régime linguistique qui ne peuvent pas être "négociés" sur place avec l'interprète, mais avec le chef du service des recrutements.
- Pour 2 langues et 1 heure de prestation, un seul interprète pourrait suffire. Si la durée ou le nombre de langues rendent nécessaires le recours à plus d'un interprète (seule la DG INTE peut définir le nombre d'interprètes nécessaires), ceux-ci seront imputés au crédit du député.
- Le crédit est strictement personnel et non transférable. Les excédents éventuels ne peuvent pas être reportés sur l'année suivante.
- Un député ne peut pas exiger le service d'un interprète X en particulier.
- Un interprète ne peut pas être mis à disposition pour traduire des textes par écrit.
- La dignité professionnelle de l'interprète doit être préservée.

Rules applicable to the *INTERPRETATION AD PERSONAM* service

- EP Vice-presidents, Quaestors, Committee Chairs, Rapporteurs, Shadow rapporteurs, Draftspersons for an opinion, Shadow draftspersons for an opinion and Political group coordinators have the right to use this service.
- IAP is only available in Brussels and Strasbourg on week days (not on official holidays or office closing days).
- Requests must be submitted at least 3 working days before the date of the meeting.
- This service will be available for all official languages except Maltese and Gaelic.
- Consecutive or whispering ("chuchotage") will be the usual interpretation mode employed. Other modes such as simultaneous or "valise" (simultaneous using portable sound equipment) may be used if DG INTE so decides; this decision will be taken depending on available resources, the installations needed, and details of the request. Teleconferencing or videoconferencing will only be possible if DG INTE is given ample prior notice so that it can check feasibility. This service will not be available for telephone interpreting (Skype, etc) or interpreting of films.
- If a room other than the MEP's office is to be used, it must be booked by the MEPs staff in accordance with current rules.
- All requests will be deducted from the MEP's allocation, even if they are cancelled afterwards.
- Any change in geographical location, date, time or languages requested will be considered to be a new request and will be deducted from the MEP's allocation.
- Any fraction of an hour will be counted as a full working hour.
- If an interpreter is asked to wait at the place of the meeting, this will be counted as working time.
- An overrun of the scheduled meeting time cannot be unilaterally decided during the meeting by the MEP, as the interpreter may be assigned to another MEP after the scheduled ending time in order to make optimal use of resources. This is also the case for changes in the type of interpretation or the languages used. These should not be negotiated on the spot with the interpreter but should only be discussed with the Head of Unit in charge of Recruitment.
- For certain 1 hour meetings using 2 languages, a single interpreter may suffice. If the duration of the meeting or the number of languages makes it necessary to provide more than one interpreter, this will be deducted from the MEP's allocation. Only DG INTE is competent for determining the number of interpreters needed.
- The allocation is strictly personal and non-transferable, and may not be carried over from one year to the next.
- An MEP cannot request the services of a specific interpreter.
- Interpreters cannot be asked to do written translations.
- The professional dignity of the interpreter must be respected at all times.

APPENDIX F

REDDY ON THE CONDUIT MODEL

Reddy (1993) explains that his “initial work...suggests it is easier, when speaking and thinking in terms of the conduit metaphor, to blame the speaker for failures” (p. 168). Within the context of the discourse about SI in the EP, blame (at least complaint) is typically assigned to the interpreter, not the original Member (e.g. this research; and Vuorikoski, 2004). Interpreters’ rendered speech (their interpretations) are accused of ‘causing’ misunderstanding (a similar phenomenon occurs in international business), which is further attributed to interpreters’ failure to extract ‘*the meaning*.’ “After all,” Reddy continues, “receiving and unwrapping a package is so passive and so simple—what can go wrong? A package can be difficult or impossible to open. But, if it is undamaged, and successfully opened, who can fail to find the right things in it?” (p. 168).

To illustrate the power of the conduit metaphor, Reddy conducts a thought experiment comparing and contrasting the conduit metaphor with an alternative framing he calls the toolmaker’s paradigm. He shows that

the overwhelming tendency of [a communication] system, as viewed by the conduit metaphor, will always be: success without effort...in terms of the toolmaker’s paradigm...we come to...the opposite conclusion. Human communication will almost always go astray unless real energy is expended. (p. 174)

Semantic Pathology

Reddy argues that the conduit metaphor is “not just a list of expressions” but the evidence of semantic pathology (1993, p. 178). Semantic pathology is

a concept from pretransformational semantics. In his *Principles of Semantics*, Stephen Ullman (1957, p. 122) makes use of the term *semantic pathology*. A semantic pathology arises “whenever two or more incompatible senses capable of figuring meaningfully in the same context develop around the same name.” (in Reddy, p. 178)

For instance, the two possible meanings of the English phrase, “I’m sorry,” are an apology or a display of sympathy. Reddy characterizes the need to distinguish between these two alternatives as a “delicate and difficult problem:”

“I’m sorry” can mean either, “I empathize with your suffering,” or “I admit fault and apologize.” Sometimes people expect apologies from us when we only wish to sympathize, in which case saying, ‘I’m sorry,’ is either the perfect hedge or the opening line of a fight. Other times, people think we are apologizing when they see no need for us to apologize and respond with, “That’s alright, it wasn’t your fault.” (p. 178)

The issue of semantic pathology concerns whether it is important to distinguish the metaphor of a conduit from the actualities of human communication using language. Reddy argues that “the interaction of the conduit metaphor with the conceptual foundations of information theory” resulted in “the whole notion of information as ‘the power to make selections’” being “muddled beyond repair” (p. 182).

Shannon and Weaver’s Mathematical Theory of Communication

Reddy uses mathematical information theory (Shannon and Weaver, 1949) to:

- 1 illustrate how words do not contain meanings but are only signals for a co-construction of meaning among people laboring to establish an ‘a priori shared context,’ and
- 2 show how the conduit metaphor contaminated efforts to extend “the essential insight of information theory” to other domains (notably biology and the social sciences), and is
- 3 evident in the labeling of their model as well as in Shannon and (especially) Weaver’s ordinary language use.

“The conceptual basis of the new mathematics,” claims Reddy, “though not the mathematics itself, has been completely obscured by the semantic pathologies of the conduit metaphor” (1993, p. 181). Mathematical information theory is

based totally on the notion that the message...is never sent anywhere...the “received signals” were not necessarily the “transmitted signal” because of the possible intervention of distortion and noise. But they blithely wrote the word “message” on the right, or receiving side of their famous paradigm (Shannon & Weaver, 1949, p. 7). At the very least they should have written “reconstructed message” there. In their theory, something is *rebuilt* on that right side which, hopefully, resembles the original message on the left side. The ambiguity of the word “message” should have led them to regard this word as a disaster and never to consider it for use. (p. 183)

The reconstruction that occurs on the right/receiving side of the information model is accomplished through a process of selection among previously-established alternatives, which are part of an ‘a priori shared context.’

The “signals” of the mathematical theory are...patterns that can travel, that can be exchanged..the alternatives—the “messages” are not contained in the signals. If the signals were to arrive at the receiving end, and the set of alternatives was damaged or missing, the proper selections could not be made. The signals have no ability to bring the alternatives with them; they carry no little replica of the message. (p. 182)

Reddy summarizes Shannon and Weaver’s mathematical information theory thus:

Information is defined as the ability to make nonrandom selections from some set of alternatives. Communication, which is the transfer of this ability from one place to another, is envisioned as occurring in the following manner. The set of alternatives and a *code* relating these alternatives to physical signals are established, and a copy of each is placed at both the sending and receiving ends of the system. This act creates what is known as an “a priori shared context,” a prerequisite for achieving any communication whatsoever. At the transmitting end, a sequence of the alternatives, called the *message*, is chosen for communication to the other end. But this sequence of alternatives is not sent. Rather, the chosen alternatives are related systematically by the code

to some form of energy patterns which can travel quickly and retain their shape while they do travel—that is, to the signals (p. 181).

By analogy with what has been learned from the discourse about SI in the EP, the homolingual assumption *presumes* that an a priori context with matching sets of alternatives *has already been established*, and the code (of, say, English as a lingua franca/ELF) aligns perfectly with the copies of these alternatives in all the relevant sending and receiving locations, that is, within the cognition (be it at the level of practical or discursive consciousness) of each Member, every interpreter, and all languages.

The point of mathematical information theory is that “information [is] the power to reproduce an organization by means of nonrandom selections. Signals *do something*. They cannot *contain* anything” (Reddy, 1993, p. 184). Weaver, apparently, “could not hold the theory clearly in mind when he spoke of human communication, and used conduit metaphor expressions almost constantly” (p. 183). Shannon, however, “used exactly the right ordinary language terms. He wrote, ‘The *receiver* ordinarily performs the inverse operation of that done by the transmitter, reconstructing the message from the signal’ (p. 34)” (in Reddy, p. 184). Building from Reddy’s critique in order to apply the analogy of mathematical information theory to the discourse about SI in the EP, we come up with a definition of communication as the (repeated, therefore *ritual*) transfer of *the social ability* to make nonrandom selections from a set of alternatives in order to reproduce a social organization.

Reddy (1993) elaborates a major and minor framework of the conduit metaphor and lists the implications of their core expressions. The major framework (p. 170) of the conduit model implies:

- language functions like a conduit, transferring thoughts bodily from one person to another—e.g. “If you salesmen can’t put this understanding across to the clients more forcefully, our new product will fail” (p. 189);
- in writing and speaking, people insert their thoughts or feelings in the words—e.g., “If you can’t pack more thought into fewer words, you will never pass the conciseness test” (p. 190);
- words accomplish the transfer by containing the thoughts or feelings and conveying them to others—“His words carry little in the way of recognizable meaning” (p. 191); and
- in listening or reading, people extract the thoughts or feelings once again from the words—e.g., “Please pay attention to what’s there in the words!” (p. 193)

Reiterating, Reddy says:

The major framework [of the conduit metaphor] sees ideas as existing either within human heads or, at least, within words uttered by humans. The ‘minor’ framework overlooks words as containers and allows ideas and feelings to flow, unfettered and completely disembodied, into a kind of ambient space between human heads. In this case, the conduit of language becomes, not sealed pipelines from person to person, but rather individual pipes which allow mental content to escape into, or enter from, this ambient space. (p. 170)

The minor framework (p. 170-171) involves three categories of expression:

- 1 thoughts and feelings are ejected by speaking or writing into an external ‘idea space’—e.g., “IBM put forth the idea that they had been mistreated” (p. 194);
- 2 thoughts and feelings are reified in this external space, so that they exist independent of any need for living human beings to think or feel them—e.g., “The concept made its way very quickly into the universities” (p. 196); and
- 3 these reified thoughts and feelings may, or may not, find their way back into the heads of living humans—e.g., “Different ideas come to mind in a situation like this” (p. 197).

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